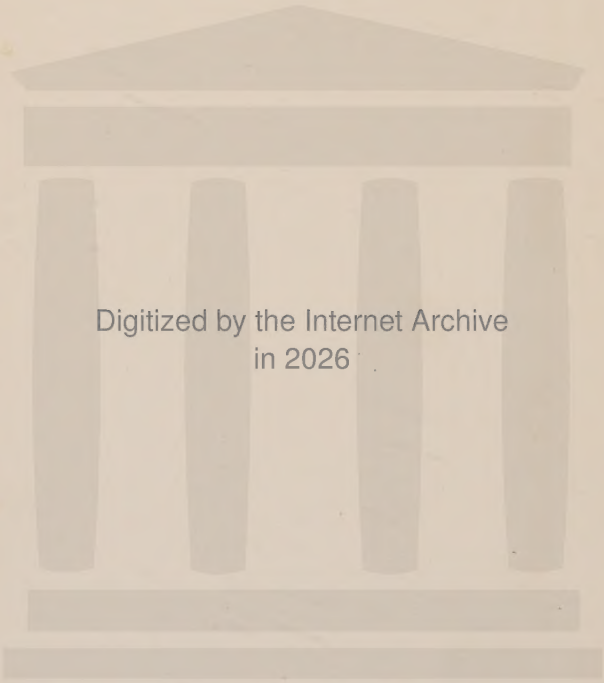
AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE CHURCH HYMNARY: REVISED EDITION

T. F. KINLOCH



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The Church Hymnary

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BY

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Preface — Latin Hymns — Greek Hymns and the Te Deum—German Hymns—The English Hymn — Nineteenth Century Hymns — Appendix

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W. HEFFER & SONS LTD
CAMBRIDGE MCMXXVII

TO

W.P.C.C.A.O.

1921—1926

PRINTED IN ENGLAND

Preface

CANON Ellerton wrote many hymns, helped to compile more than one popular hymnal and possessed a knowledge of hymns which few men of his generation equalled and perhaps only one excelled. Yet when his biographer suggests that there was scarcely a hymn which Ellerton did not know, he taxes our credulity; for there are at least 400,000 hymns and we may feel quite certain that the man has not yet been born who possessed an adequate knowledge of them all. Those who wish to study hymns in anything like a systematic fashion, must turn in the first instance to the one book in the English language which deals with them in a comprehensive and masterly way. Julian's great dictionary is the work not of one but of many hands. It is the mine to which all writers on hymns constantly turn, the source from which they derive all or almost all that is of value in their works. But "Julian" is expensive, is written in anything but a popular style, and is of more service to those who already know something of hymns than to those whose studies are about to begin. A dictionary of this kind then, is hardly calculated to appeal to the man in the street; in the present instance perhaps one ought to say, to "the man in the pew," who in these busy days has little time and perhaps even

less inclination to study a monumental work. Hence there are innumerable books on hymns of a simpler and more popular character. We may divide them into three classes. First there are the "Historical Editions" of various hymnals, in which by means of short notes the information given in "Julian" with regard to date and authorship, is presented in much smaller compass. Most of these books are written by scholars and are extremely valuable as far as they go; but in almost every instance lack of space prevents adequate discussion, and in some cases they are little better than glorified versions of *Who's Who.*

(2)

Next there are the brightly written "chatty" guides which contain an enormous amount of irrelevant information. Some people are apparently interested to learn that a certain landed gentleman once wrote to *The Times* claiming that the "Rock of Ages" was to be found on his estate, or to speak more accurately, that he owned the cleft rock in which Toplady found refuge from a storm, the rock which is said to have suggested the imagery of his immortal hymn. Or, to take another example, that a band of Plymouth Brethren invaded Lyte's parish, converted ten out of twelve members of his choir, who forsook their Parish Church, that when shortly after "Abide with me" was written and each of the ten deserters received a presentation copy of the work, he felt with that charming modesty which is to be met with in so many choristers, that the

words "when other helpers fail" applied to him. But after all, such facts—if facts they be—are concerned with the outworks rather than with the citadel, afford little help to one who really seeks to grasp the *spirit* of the hymn. And, not to enlarge upon this many-sided topic, he who wishes to know the exact relations which existed between Fortunatus and his friend Queen Radegunda, to learn the story of the hapless love of Héloise for Abelard, will do far better to turn in the one instance to the pages of Thierry, in the other to the matchless prose of George Moore, than to the works of any hymnologist who up till now has sought to brighten his pages by reference to such romantic tales.

(3)

A third class of book brings together instances in which hymns have proved of service. What Prothero did for the Psalms in showing how men instinctively turned to this or that verse in time of trouble, others have done for hymns, and by so doing have sometimes shed real light upon their meaning. In addition to these there is another, though much rarer, kind of book. In "Hymns, their history and development in the Greek and Latin Churches, Germany and Great Britain" Roundell Palmer (Earl of Selborne) has given a brilliant account of hymns. From the standpoint of the ordinary reader, it has, however, two main defects. In the first place it is so condensed and assumes so much knowledge that many find it somewhat

difficult to read. In the second place it deals with Latin and German in a more adequate fashion than it does with English, to say nothing of American, hymns. Yet in spite of this, it is still perhaps the best *small* book—it is little more than a lengthy pamphlet—the English reader is likely to meet. What Lord Selborne did for hymns in general, the present writer would like to do for those contained in the Church Hymnary in particular.

It has been often said that in certain ages one aspect of Christ's character was more clearly realised than it was in any other. The solitaries in the Nitrian desert, for instance, recognised the ascetic element in Him who had nowhere to lay His head as perhaps we cannot do to-day. The first Greek converts worshipped One who claimed to be the Truth. In the Middle Ages men saw in Jesus the "King of Majesty tremendous," whilst in our own time men have turned adoring eyes to Him "who went about doing good." A complete picture of Jesus would include all these elements, yet the fact remains that each man has the defects of his qualities, and that those who have perceived one element most clearly have been prone to underrate or neglect the others.[1]

So it is with hymns. At sundry times in divers places certain great elements of Christian experience have been felt more keenly than at any other time.

[1] Heiler has tried to show that this applies to churches as well as to individuals: that a complete picture of Christian truth and experience is only gained when we add together the specific contributions of each great section—Latin, Greek, Protestant—of the Church.

The Church Hymnary renders good service by bringing together these manifold experiences and presenting them as imperfect aspects of one perfect whole. Those who use the book are constantly reminded of how wide and rich, complete Christian experience is. At the same time they are rightly led to expect that out of such wealth of material they may hope to find *something* which will express their ever-varying moods and satisfy their ever-changing needs. Our purpose then, is to take this rich compound, the product of many centuries, and by analysing each of the main constituents into its component parts to show how these have contributed to enrich the whole. Or, to exchange chemical for artistic analogy, to regard the Church Hymnary as a great gallery containing a collection gathered out of many lands. In this gallery there are many rooms. In one of these we find "Crucifixions" and nothing but "Crucifixions"; in another "Nativities" and nothing but "Nativities" and so on. It may be argued that the best way in which to study the crucifixion is to bring all the pictures which deal with it into *one* room; so that those who enter it may readily see all that Raphaelite and Pre-Raphaelite, Italian and Fleming, and many another has to say on this dark theme. Yet this is not the plan on which most galleries are arranged. As a rule one room is devoted to one century, another to another; or each of the great "schools" of painting receives a section to itself. This it is that we propose to do: to take the pictures—"Crucifixions," "Nativities," which in the hymn-book are arranged

according to their subject and rearrange them according to the period to which they belong. (Many a picture acquires new meaning from a fresh setting). In other words we shall take Latin, German, English hymns, and examine each class to discover if it has anything to say which others do not say with equal emphasis, to see whether through diversity of age and nationality those who wrote them saw something in Jesus which others did not see so well, knew something of the Christian life which others did not know at all or knew less perfectly.

It is not the object of this book, then, to criticise the hymns which compose the Church Hymnary, to pass sentence on the wisdom or unwisdom of its compilers. Others will do this readily enough. The "man in the pew" will criticise. The scholar will also criticise. The first will complain, as he always does complain, that certain old favourties are omitted, that hymns which he has found helpful are not included in the book. The second will ask, to take one single example, why the hymns "Jesus the very thought of Thee" and its companions are unquestioningly ascribed to Bernard in view of the fact that great experts like Dreves and Blume are confident that Bernard was not their author[1]: that Hauréau who devoted so much attention to the

[1] "We possess four hymns by Bernard of which the authenticity is indisputable: three on St. Victor, one on St. Malachias of Armagh. They reveal the great rhetorician as a clumsy poet, feeble in invention, chilly in feeling," Dreves-Blume *Ein Jahrtausend Lateinischer Hymnendichtung*, I, 237, 8; and *Des Poèmes Latins, attribuées a St. Bernard*, Paris, 1890.

subject shared their opinion: that despite the fact that Bernard yielded to the entreaties of the Victorine monks, and wrote three hymns in honour of their patron saint, he was strongly opposed—as Coulton has shown[1]—to monks writing hymns at all. Such questions as these which demand attention must be left to others. Meanwhile we are only concerned to call attention to certain features of the book.

(1) The Church Hymnary is essentially *eclectic*. For reasons that we shall presently consider, the Presbyterian Church has produced few hymns. A church resembles a country in one respect: when she does not manufacture she is tempted to import. The table of the humblest artisan in modern Scotland presents a far greater variety of food than was known to the richest nobles at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Many fruits and vegetables familiar to us were utterly unknown to them. It is true that we began to eat oranges, not because they contained Vitamin A, but because we liked them: yet the fact remains that it is all to the good that we *do* eat oranges. However deeply we love, however deeply we revere, the metrical psalms—and no Presbyterian can esteem them too highly—the fact remains that our fathers not only found them a little monotonous, but felt that they lacked certain spiritual vitamins. They were silent for instance, they were bound to be silent, on such great themes as the death of Christ and its meaning for mankind.

[1] G. G. Coulton, *Five Centuries of Religion*, Vol. I, p. 301.

Broadly speaking, most of our hymns are imported. By importing hymns from every quarter, our editors have produced a book which gives, as we have already suggested, an admirable picture of Christian life in general; in the nature of things—in view of the fact that so few of the hymns are of native origin—it may be questioned if they have succeeded in giving an equally satisfactory picture of that specific type of religious experience which is associated with the name of Presbyterian. One cannot read the Gesangbuch without feeling that it is essentially Lutheran: from first to last the English Hymnal, still as many think the best Hymn Book in the English language, breathes the spirit of that school to which it belongs, the hymns in the Breviary are undoubtedly Roman, but how far the Church Hymnary is or could have been made a specifically Presbyterian book it is difficult to determine.

In any case the divine impartiality which has led the editors to include in one book the songs of Quakers who disbelieve in Sacraments altogether, and the famous poem (Hymn 303, which even in the Roman Church is read in private rather than sung in public) by the man who drew up the various offices for the Feast of Corpus Christi, and defined that doctrine of Transubstantiation against which our fathers fought to the very death; this tolerant spirit whilst it does indeed make for comprehensiveness, is scarcely calculated to help the outsider who turns to the Church Hymnary or the children who use it in divine service to learn what a Presbyterian

is, what views, if any, he is *as a Presbyterian* expected to hold.

(2) Yet in another sense the Church Hymnary is essentially *denominational*. There is as yet no Anglican Hymnal. Up to now the Church of England has never published *one* book which all her congregations were asked to use. Instead groups of men have produced several books and offered them for the service of their brethren. The Church Hymnary, on the other hand, is the work of a group of men acting in the name and on behalf of a number of Presbyterian churches. It is obvious, of course, that a free lance has in some ways greater scope than a representative. For one thing he is much less conservative. If he dislikes a hymn he can suppress it, if he is attracted to a hymn he can at once include it in his collection. Hence it is that the *Yattendon Hymnal* of Robert Bridges, the *Songs of Syon* by Woodward, the *Songs of Praise* of Dr. Dearmer are so revolutionary. Compared with these books especially with the latter, the Church Hymnary is conservative in the extreme. It retains nineteenth century hymns which many modern editors would unhesitatingly reject, and it is chary, it has to be chary of introducing novelties. It favours the hymns which have done good service in the past rather than those which may possibly do good service in the future. It belongs to the nineteenth century rather than to the twentieth, for it is the free lances who look forward, who take risks. Only when a hymn has

proved its usefulness may it expect to gain admission to such a collection as the Church Hymnary. Whilst the newer hymn, the hymn which reflects the thoughts and feelings of that world which we may call the post-war world, may have to wait until having won favour with sheep of other folds it may hope to gain admission into ours.

Yet after all this is only partially true. The editors tell us that they examined 1300 new hymns in addition to "many original compositions and translations" which were "submitted" to them. Time and time alone will tell how far the "new" hymns selected are likely to be of service to the Church.

In the eighteenth century the Church of Scotland asked for Paraphrases, and she received contributions from without which she adapted to her needs. At the same time, however, she received princely gifts from her own sons. Few hymns are dearer to the Presbyterian heart than such great songs as these: "Where high the heavenly temple stands," "Come let us to the Lord our God," "The race that long in darkness pined," "'Twas on that night when doomed to know." From the eighteenth century we derive our greatest hymns; yet the nineteenth century gave a few which deserve to become immortal. As for the twentieth century? Alas the fruits of the first five-and-twenty years are scanty and disappointing in the extreme. For this there are many reasons. During these years things have gone none too well with the Church. She has known neither great prosperity nor bitter

persecution—each the fruitful mother of noble song —small attritions have worn her down. The hymns of the twentieth century are as yet unwritten. Yet the time must surely come when the Lord will put a new song in our mouth. Some men have filled their hymn books, as they have filled their houses with "antiques." It is well to revere the great craftsmen of the past; but none can live on the past alone. Each age must make its own contribution to the sum of human experience. This is true of hymns as of other things. When the Church is filled once more with life and energy she will call for *new* songs and get them. Till she is thus renewed and reinspired, she will ask in vain.

(4) Finally the editors make it clear that they use the word "Hymn" in its broadest sense. The most famous definition of a hymn is that given by St. Augustine in his commentary on Ps. 72. "Hymni laudes sunt Dei cum cantico." There are thus three elements in a hymn. It must be sung: it must consist of praise: and that praise must be addressed to God. Those who rigidly adhere to this definition at once get rid of five hymns out of six; nay more of nine out of ten: for many hymns are only prayers in verse (e.g. "Abide with me,") many more merely moralise or dogmatise. Few alas, very, very few are filled with praise and praise alone. Yet these—hymns like the "Te Deum," "Old Hundred" and "Nun Danket"—are the greatest of all hymns. No modern hymn book then consists exclusively of songs of praise: it consists for the most part of words which *may* be used to sing the praise of God. Our fathers

felt that no words save those of Scripture were fit to be used in the service of God's house, we have come to feel that whilst mortal lip has never framed words entirely adequate to the praise of the Most High, yet such is His unspeakable grace that when hearts are humble, He is ready to regard our very prayers as praise.

Latin Hymns

"With his whole heart he sang praise."—Ecclus 47–8.

Amongst the many things which Rome borrowed from Greece was the word "hymn." The Greeks sang "hymns" in praise of their heroes and their gods; and when the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek the word "Hymn" was used to describe the praises which the Hebrews sang to God. Among the Christians who spoke Greek, i.e. amongst the Christians of the East there were "hymns" almost from the beginning. But it was not until the fourth century that hymns found their way into the Western Church. In those days the greatest man in the West was Ambrose. The son of a wealthy and influential father he had held high office in the State; yet though a man of noble character and devout Christian spirit he remained unbaptised till he was thirty-four years of age. At that time he was living in Milan. The Bishop of Milan died. Excited partisans could not agree upon his successor till someone suggested that Ambrose should fill the post. Forthwith he was baptised and within a week—so differently were things done in those early days—he was appointed bishop. The popular choice was fully justified; for Ambrose, statesman, scholar, saint, is one of the greatest

bishops in history. It is, however, as a hymn writer that he interests us. Grimm called him "the Father of Church Song." He was, indeed, amongst the very first to write hymns in Latin for the services of the Church, and it is almost certain that no other hymns have exerted so wide and deep an influence as those he wrote. It was still in the days when there was much dispute as to the "nature" of Christ. Was He very God or was He merely God-like? For the moment the Emperor's mother favoured the latter view, sought to place one who was prepared to uphold it, in a church at Milan. Ambrose refused to allow the heretic to take possession. The Empress sought to make him yield by using armed force; but his people stood by their bishop, guarded him day and night in his cathedral, and in return it is said he gave them sacred songs wherewith to strengthen their faith and to maintain their courage.

The hymns of Ambrose then come from a time of conflict, and were intended to give a clear expression of the orthodox faith. They are what critics term "objective." Whether I choose to accept it or not there *is* a truth concerning God. In an age like ours when everyone is encouraged to hold opinions of his own, when it is sometimes suggested that one man's views on religious matters are likely to be as valuable as those of another, it is well to be reminded that for centuries men felt that outside of them, entirely independent of all their passing whims, their subjective fancies, there was objective truth.

But the Ambrosian hymn is objective in another

sense. It turns from man and looks to God. Many a modern hymn is little better than a piece of egoism. From first to last the song echoes and re-echoes with the word "I": in Ambrose instead of "I" there is "God." We never meet with the word "I" in Ambrose: he always uses "we" for the singer regards himself as one of a band of brothers, united in the *praise* of God. Of all hymns the hymns of Ambrose are the most simple, and perhaps the most austere. They are like a great Norman Church, strong and magnificent; but entirely destitute of "pleasing" ornament, and they are so important because when Benedict, the founder of the monastic system, drew up his Rule, he insisted that the hymns of Ambrose should be sung. Of the many hymns ascribed to Ambrose only twelve are admitted by experts to be his. Of these we have but one (No. 4), a hymn intended to be sung on Saturday evening when the week's work is finished. No hymn writer has so many "Presbyterian" qualities as Ambrose, dislike of emotion, hatred of sentimentality, admiration for strength, courage, simplicity and self-restraint.

Another hymn (252) of much the same type comes from an even greater man than Ambrose. That Gregory who pitied the English slaves who had come to Rome "non angli sed angeli" and determined to tell them of Jesus, that Gregory who won fame as preacher, statesman, saint, will always be associated with hymns, for he is the inventor of those solemn chants which are still called by his name and are still sung 1300 years after his death.

Ambrose and Gregory were ecclesiastics: they deliberately wrote their hymns for congregational use, but Prudentius was a layman. A Spaniard, ardent, passionate, his youth by no means unblemished, he had been a barrister and civil servant. When fifty-seven, he went to Rome determined to consecrate the remainder of his life to singing the praise of Christ.

Lo in the palace of the King of Kings
I play the earthen pitcher's humble part;
Yet to have done Him meanest service brings
A thrill of rapture to my thankful heart;
Whate'er the end this thought will joy afford,
My lips have sung the praises of my Lord.[1]

His hymns were not written to be sung, they are much too long for that. If they had a purpose at all it was to commend the gospel of Christ to the cultured heathen of his time. The cold restraint, the aloofness which marks Ambrose and the Ambrosian type of hymn has no place in Prudentius. A German critic[2] once compared his verse to molten lava, maintained that his work is the most splendid and precious which the Christian religion has produced, said that his hymns were like music from a vast organ which made the whole universe quiver, in whose notes were blended bitter wailing for man's fall and exultant triumph at his redemption. There is exaggeration here: still of all hymns written about Christ's birth there are not three which equal

[1] *The Hymns of Prudentius*, translated by R. Martin Pope.
[2] Karl Fortlage. Gesange christlicher Vorzeit.

"Corde natus," the glorious song of Prudentius (55). (Part of "a hymn for all hours" of 38 verses.)

Perhaps the greatest English hymn on the Passion is "When I survey." There are, however, two Latin hymns (Nos. 101, 102), which are far more famous and, as many think, more justly famed. The strange thing is that they were written by a man who was amongst the very last one would expect to be keenly interested in such a theme at all. To the men of his own day, Fortunatus, an Italian, who spent most of his life in France, was a fashionable poet who repaid the hospitality of nobles and abbots with graceful verse. He loved good living, and was a squire of dames. Whilst no one suggests that his relations with Queen Radegunda were immoral, yet there was in them not a little of that idle if graceful dalliance which is rarely found in one who tries to preach the gospel as dying man to dying men. Yet to Fortunatus fell the high honour of writing the greatest hymns in honour of the Cross. Those who read them carefully even in the shortened form in which they are given in the Church Hymnary[1] will guess even if they do not know (cf. 101, v. 4; 102, vv. 4, 5), that they were originally written in honour of a fragment of the true Cross. (As a matter of fact, 102 was first sung at a solemn procession held in honour of its reception)—and that (102, v. 5) the theory of the "atonement" which Fortunatus held was that crude view which taught

[1] In Latin 101 consists of ten verses (excluding the Doxology 102 of eight verses.

that the devil was deceived in Christ whom he mistook for a mere man and regarded as an easy prey. Yet despite the fact that these hymns are inseparably associated with the Veneration of the Cross, and with a crude doctrine of the Passion which has long since been discarded, they are sung and will be sung when hymns entirely devoid of superstition, filled with the most impeccable orthodoxy are utterly forgotten. Why? Most hymns which deal with the Crucifixion ask us to pity Christ. He himself asked for no pity. "Weep not for me." To the Christian the Cross is not a pathetic spectacle; it is a battlefield on which the greatest of all victories was won. In no hymns is this sense of triumph more nobly expressed than in these two great hymns of Fortunatus. Isaac Watts had something to say about Isaac Watts: "When *I* survey": Fortunatus had nothing whatever to say of Fortunatus. He is utterly absorbed in Christ. His hymn is "objective." Faber (92) asks us to come and *mourn*. Fortunatus (Sing my tongue!) bids us rejoice. Here then we have the secret of the enduring power of these great hymns. They express as none others do, the sense of joy and gratitude which Christians feel when in the Cross they see the matchless heroism, the glorious victory of Christ.

Since Fortunatus could see triumph even in the blood-stained Cross we are prepared to find him rejoicing with even greater joy at the Resurrection. From one of his poems certain verses[1] have

[1] In Latin 14 verses from his poem. C. III, n. 9.

been taken to form a lovely Easter processional (Hymn 112) in which the poet shows how Nature rejoices with man in the resurrection of the Prince of Life.

If the Presbyterian Church does not actually frown on the dramatic, she does little to encourage it. She has found other ways of expressing her emotions than through processions. Yet when she hymns her Lord's triumphal entry she can find no better means of doing so than by making use of a "processional" (88). Every "gossipy guide" has told how Theodulph when in prison saw King Louis and other dignitaries pass his window and sang this hymn through his prison bars. The story is quite apocryphal: none the less "Gloria, laus et honor" remains the best of all Palm Sunday hymns.

Every son of Calvin (who laid more emphasis perhaps than any other man on the part played in our redemption by the Holy Spirit), has felt that faith and virtue alike depend on His supernatural help. Yet when the Presbyterian Church sings of the Holy Ghost, she always does so in borrowed words. Each of the hymns on the Holy Spirit (171–187) is a prayer: but by far the noblest is the "Veni Creator Spiritus," which is given in two versions (173, 174).[1] In the Western Church it ranks after the "Te Deum" as the grandest of all hymns. The more closely one examines it the more rich it is seen to be in theological ideas; yet though one of the

[1] In *Les Hymnes du Bréviaire Romain*, Vol. III, pp. 125–143, the abbé Pimont has given the best account of this great hymn.

most intellectual of hymns (and therefore one of the best adapted to Presbyterian needs), its every thought is turned into a prayer.

Before coming to consider the hymns of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries which have a quality of their own, we must say a word or two on "Sequences." At a certain point in the celebration of High Mass, the "Epistle" is sung, after that comes the "Gradual" a short anthem generally consisting of one verse which is sung from the steps (gradus) leading up to the altar, after this comes the Gospel for the day. The "Gradual" ends with the word "alleluia"; but the deacon who sang the gospel took some little time to get to his place and so the choir had to prolong the last syllable in all-el-u-ia for 30, 40, sometimes for even 100 notes. Now there was a Swiss monk, Notker the Stammerer, who said to himself: "Instead of making these unmeaning sounds [the musical notes were at times hard to remember] I shall make up words which can be sung instead of ā, ā, ā." This he did and thus we get the "Sequence" (sequens = following: the song that follows the "gradual" sometimes called the Prose because the sequence was first written in prose). In the Middle Ages these sequences were very popular and soon came to be written in verse. Indeed some of the most famous of medieval "hymns" like the "Dies Irae" are really sequences.[1] In the Church Hymnary we

[1] When the Roman Missal was revised in 1570, all these sequences were abolished except four. About 1727, another was added ("The Stabat Mater").

have several sequences. One by Notker himself (12) which as Neale has rightly pointed out is almost ruined by being sung to Troyte's chant: one, which many feel to be the most beautiful hymn in the book (175) the "golden sequence" as it is called of which Trench said "The loveliest . . . of all the hymns in the whole circle of Latin sacred poetry . . . which could only have been composed by one who had been acquainted with many sorrows, and also with many consolations." One who knows and loves this glorious hymn needs no further teaching with regard to the doctrine of the Holy Ghost for he already knows as much as the greatest scholar in Christendom. Its superb mastery of scripture is only equalled by its profound knowledge of the human heart. Two other sequences are amongst the most famous of all "hymns" the "Dies Irae" and the "Stabat Mater."

The "Dies Irae" was written by Thomas of Celano, a Franciscan monk. In some older Presbyterian hymnals the whole hymn was printed as Dr. Irons translated it. The Church Hymnary simply retains the three stanzas of a version made by Sir Walter Scott (155). Many must regret the change: for little as the modern man may care to think about the last Judgment, little as modern hymns refer to it, the *fact* behind the imagery of the gospels and the apocalypse, remains a fact. No greater representation of the New Testament picture has ever been given than in this which some regard as the greatest of all hymns. Those who have heard the Hallé choir sing it (in Berlioz's superb

setting in the "Messe des Morts") will find it difficult to mention any other piece of sacred music which stirred them to the very depths with equal power. There are some who face the future with unruffled brow: some because they have great faith; others because they are merely callous. Most men, however, as they remember the opportunities they have lost, the duties they have neglected, the evil they have done, will feel—as they think of the "Day of Judgment"—the force of these wondrous words:

> King of Majesty tremendous
> Who dost free salvation send us
> Fount of pity then befriend us.

(2) The "Stabat Mater" is the most pathetic hymn in literature, and if it were written—as so many good judges think it was—by Jacopone (Long Jim) we owe it as we do the "Dies Irae" to a Franciscan. As Blessed Francis understood the words of the Gospel about parting with possessions in the most literal way, so his follower, Jacobus—once a successful lawyer—understood the words about being a fool for Christ's sake in an equally literal sense. So successfully did he play the fool that men thought him mad. He was far from mad; spent much time in prison because he did not fear to denounce the sins of the princes of the Church in the most trenchant manner. Yet he who played the fool so readily, who grimaced at men and used the antics of a clown, he who so bravely defied his persecutor, Boniface VIII, wrote the "Stabat Mater," which so long as a mother knows what it is to lose a grown-up son will never lack a reader.

Nay more: as long as there is sorrow in the world at all, men will see its most perfect symbol in that "mater dolorosa" through whose heart the sword had gone.

Before we leave Latin hymns there are two other classes which demand attention. First the hymns of the Cloister. We have already seen that the hymns 403, 404, 405, were almost certainly not written by St. Bernard; none the less, we have it on high authority that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. So far as we can gather, Christ taught men that their prayers should be short and simple: yet at the same time we are told that He often spent a whole night in prayer. The prayers of most will ever be short: yet when we seek to learn what prayer may mean, we turn instinctively to those who have spent hours and hours upon their knees. In the same way whilst we all admit that meditation should form an essential part of the religious life, we recognise that we lack both time and ability to practise it. So here again we turn if we are wise to those who through constant practice have learnt what religious contemplation really means. In the cloister we find such men, cut off from ordinary life and the performance of normal duties: and we discover that whilst they lack qualities which we possess, the best of them have qualities we certainly lack. Here then we have the "Jubilus de nomine Jesu," a hymn of fifty strophes which deals entirely with the loveliness of the person of Jesus. We are wounded He can heal us, we are hungry He can feed us, we are weary He can give

us rest (402, v. i). Whatever our needs they can be satisfied in Him. Then, too, there are the hymns "Brief life is here our portion," "Jerusalem the golden" (570, 571, 572) which Neale has taken from Bernard the Cluniac. Bernard wrote a poem of 3000 lines in a metre so difficult that he felt that he would never have written it at all but for special assistance received from the Holy Ghost. It is in essence "a bitter satire on the fearful corruptions of the age," yet in contrast to the present world with all its sin, the poet paints a glowing picture of the world to come.

A generation ago an English poet told us that our concern is solely with the present life. "Here where I fail or conquer. *Here* is my concern. Here where perhaps alone I conquer or I fail." Since the war when so many "passed over to the other side" the emphasis has changed. The Bible was written when man's view of the universe was very different from what it is to-day, and the modern man cannot write hymns about heaven, but those who believe in heaven at all will often come to feel that the naive pictures of the apocalypse are after all as good symbols of the ineffable reality as any we are likely to find and that the equally naive symbolism of "Jerusalem the golden" has been equalled by few if any writers of modern times. Here as elsewhere the child-like mind has discerned truths that are hidden and will remain hidden from the wise and prudent.

The men of the Middle Ages were by no means children. Gladstone who knew most of the great

men of his day said that he had never met with any who excelled the greatest of the medieval schoolmen in power of thought. In the Church Hymnary there are two hymns from men of this type. Greatly daring the editors have included one hymn (303) which many will feel has no right to appear in a Presbyterian book at all. It involves complete belief in the doctrine of transubstantiation. It is included, we presume, because the editors have rightly felt that Aquinas—the greatest theologian of his time—throws speculation aside and kneels as all must do when they receive the mysterious sacrament in humble adoration of the Lord. Whatever one may think of Hymn 303, everyone must rejoice at the introduction of (213). Abelard, writer of love songs, lover of a woman whose shoelatchet he was unworthy to unloose, adored by students, suspected by ecclesiastics, was one of the great figures of his time. His love songs have perished, his philosophy, which once threatened to destroy the church, is dust: but the cry, wrung as it were from the very depths of his heart, for a better country that is an heavenly will remain for ever, and will be used (so long as men know their hearts at all) by many buffeted and tossed on life's rough sea to express their unquenchable longing for a haven in which their eternal cry for peace will be satisfied at last.

The medieval hymn is the common birthright of all sections of the Western Church. The later Latin hymn is essentially Roman Catholic. Those who compiled the Church Hymnary have not

hesitated as their fathers would have done to use material borrowed from a church which Presbyterians once regarded as the Scarlet Woman, Mystic Babylon. Their courage is rewarded. There is no better Xmas hymn than "Adeste Fideles" (51), and it is Roman Catholic; and indeed, there are few better modern hymns than those which Coffin wrote for the Paris Breviary (75, 262, 426) the last of which (426) has been so beautifully translated by the poet Laureate. Those who know their Newman will remember the immortal words in which he describes the enduring power of Latin poetry, will feel perhaps that what he says of Virgil applies with almost equal force to Latin hymns. For apart from the fact that they are written in the most majestic and sonorous tongue in which God's praise has yet been sung, that they represent the best religious thought of Europe during more than a thousand years, they are of all hymns the greatest. Of those which men term objective, those which so to speak turn from man and look to God there is none to equal the "Te Deum," just as of those which dwell on the love of the Christian for his Lord there are none so sweet as those ascribed to Bernard. On the tombstone of one of England's greatest churchmen[1]—perhaps the very greatest—these words are inscribed: "Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem." Nowhere is that idea—at once a noble confession of faith, and a pathetic cry for the satisfaction which things of sense and time can never give—so nobly expressed as in those immortal songs of medieval

[1] J. H. Newman.

pilgrims whose feet were shod, whose loins were girt, whose hearts were set on that world—describe it as you will—which lies behind, beneath, above, the things of sense and time, that ineffable reality "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive."

Greek Hymns and the Te Deum

As we have already seen, Latin hymns were in the first instance derived from Greek. There are hundreds of Greek hymns, but the difficulties in the way of translating them are very great, for most Greek hymns are written in prose and the translator has to invent his own metre. John Mason Neale, the pioneer in this kind of work, confessed that "Art thou weary" (375) and "O happy band of pilgrims" (551) though suggested by Greek hymns and to some extent based upon them were virtually his own. The earliest Greek hymns are found in Scripture: the Magnificat (681), the Nunc Dimittis (682) and the Benedictus (680) in St. Luke's gospel; a few fragments in St. Paul's Epistles—Eph. v. 14, 1 Tim. i. 15, iii. 16, vi. 15; the Benedicite (685) in the Apocrypha, and certain passages in the Old Testament such as the song of Hannah, Isa. xxvi. 9-20, Jon. ii. 3-10 and Deut. iii. 26-56. When these passages were recited the congregation, or a choir representing the congregation, sang a short refrain at the close of each verse. This was known as the "Hypopsalma" and is the earliest kind of hymn. By the second century, it is thought, "antiphonal" singing had come into use, and from the fourth century we have two hymns, one of which was in universal use. "Hail, gladdening Light" (268)

which was sung at the close of vespers, and the corresponding morning hymns, the "Greater Doxology" on which the "Gloria in Excelsis" (683) is based.

Midway between the early prose hymns and the later type of Byzantine hymn, which, as we have already pointed out, was written in rhythmical prose, are a few hymns written in the old classical metres. Of these the best known is "Lead, Holy Shepherd, lead us" (546) by Clement of Alexandria, a famous scholar who inserted the hymn at the end of his treatise on education.

In addition to his hymns *based* on the Greek, Neale has two fine translations "The day is past and over" (276) and "The day of resurrection" (118). Dr. Brownlie, who has done so much to make the hymns of the Greek Church known to us, has given a translation of "O Light that knew no dawn" (438), a hymn by Gregory Nazianzen once a leading churchman who died in disgrace.

There are so few Greek hymns in the Church Hymnary that it is much more difficult for an ordinary worshipper to realise their peculiar quality than it is for him to feel the spirit of the Latin hymns. Speaking generally then, we may say that Greek hymns are long, so long indeed that only selections from them can be used; and that they include much—for instance, the place assigned to the Virgin Mary—which is alien to the spirit of the Presbyterian Church. None the less, they have a great contribution to make to what Neale called the "Treasury of the Church," they have a quality

that is all their own. They are "objective," i.e., they look away from man to God, but whereas in the Latin hymns God is chiefly regarded as what the philosopher terms the First Cause, in Greek hymns He is the Absolute. The Roman in other words was pre-eminently a man of action, the Greek a man of thought. The Latin Church fixed her eyes on the Atonement: the Greek Church on the Incarnation. The practical Roman wanted to be saved, the more contemplative Greek to know the nature of his God. From Greek theologians we derive almost all the great doctrines of the Christian Church, and in the same way the expression of the loftiest contemplation of the Divine Nature is to be found in the sacred poetry of the Greek Church.

The Te Deum.

It is impossible to deal with the Te Deum in a few sentences, and there is little need to do so, for Julian was never more fortunate than when he persuaded Dr. John Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury, one of the greatest scholars of his day, to write the article on the Te Deum for his dictionary. There all who wish to study this glorious hymn must look for adequate discussion. Here we need only say that its authors are unknown: that it is almost certainly based on the Greek, and that it is the greatest hymn ever written. Everyone knows that the translation might be considerably improved. We miss the full force in English of some of the Latin phrases, "the white-robed army of martyrs," the passage "When Thou tookest upon Thee to

deliver man" which seems almost to defy translation, and the last word which many think is not so much a prayer as a shout of triumph—"I shall never be confounded": and yet we know that just as people persist in clinging to the Authorised Version of the Bible in spite of the Revised Version, and in spite of modern translations, so let revisers do what they will, people will persist in singing that version of the Te Deum which has been sung in England for three hundred years. To speak worthily of the Te Deum would demand more space than the whole of the present volume could provide, would call for scholarship which none but the greatest experts could presume to claim. We content ourselves with making two remarks. In Latin the hymn begins "Te Deum laudamus," and anyone who reads the Latin words or hears them sung will be impressed by the fact that so many verses begin with the words Tu, or Te. Of the 27 verses, 7 begin with Te, 2 with Tibi, 5 with Tu. Thee, Thee, Thee, is the burden of this glorious song. It is like the panting of an engine or the beating of a drum. We miss this, we are bound to miss it, in an English translation which begins with "We." God, and God alone, Father, Son and Holy Ghost is the one theme of this magnificent song.

In the second place, those who sing the Te Deum in an Anglican chant as most of us do, seldom realise that the thirteenth verse, "Thou art the King of glory, O Christ," is at once a battle cry and a glad Hosannah, shouted by devoted followers with utmost enthusiasm. Even the greatest musicians have failed

to reach the heights demanded by the Te Deum, most of the "settings" provided by Anglican organists, devout, restrained, in certain places even beautiful fall so far short of the enthusiasm, the rapture, the glory of this transcendent hymn of praise as to seem little better than a caricature. Even those who have heard it sung in Latin on some great occasion with all the stately ceremony of which the Roman Church seems alone to possess the secret, confess with sorrow that we still await the coming of the musician who will do it justice.

Te gloriosus apostolorum chorus
Te prophetarum laudabilis numerus
Te martyrum candidatus laudat exercitus
Te per orbem terrarum sancta confitetur ecclesia.

German Hymns

An interesting comparison has been drawn between the hymns of Watts, the Calvinist, and those of Wesley, the Arminian. When we try to learn why German hymns are sung in Presbyterian Churches, we have to attempt the far harder task of seeking to discover the essential difference between two much greater men. For as the only reason for singing Latin hymns is the belief that they give us something which English hymns do not give, so the only reason for singing German hymns is that which makes us turn to Kant's philosophy, or Goethe's poetry, or Beethoven's sonatas—the feeling that in these there is something which is nowhere else expressed so well.

Luther was a German: Calvin was a Frenchman. The Lutheran Church is essentially German, the Presbyterian Church, wherever found bears obvious marks of its French origin. Luther was a "man of the people" who thought in German; Calvin an aristocrat, an exile who thought in terms of Europe. With greater justice than John Wesley he might have said "The world is my parish." Luther was a pioneer, a man who had to find a quick (and sometimes inadequate) solution for problems as they presented themselves from day to day; Calvin who belonged to a later generation, was able to profit by the mistakes of those who preceded him, to see

as Luther never saw, the logical outcome of a certain line of thought. All this is illustrated in the very different way in which these two great men regarded hymns. Luther loved music, was especially fond of folk-songs and of certain Church songs. (Some of the old "sequences" had been sung in German, for the medieval Church was less Italian and much less rigid than the modern Church of Rome.) His love of music in general, and of certain hymns in particular, led Luther to translate some of the old Latin hymns into German, to compose hymns which could be set to well-known tunes[1] (just as in our own time the Salvation Army has furnished words for melodies which street boys whistle and Italian organ-grinders play). This formed the nucleus of his collection, and if Coleridge exaggerates—as indeed he does—when he maintains that Luther's hymns did as much to advance the Reformation as his translation of the Bible, the fact remains that Luther's hymns carried his message to tens of thousands who never heard his voice, aroused response in the hearts of thousands who might have heard his strongest arguments with complete indifference. The German hymn then is at once popular and traditional. It comes from the heart of a people—Luther is the most German of Germans—and it has definite connection with the past.

Calvin was much more radical than Luther. He deliberately broke with the past, sought to reform the Christian Church in root and branch. To him

[1] Horatius Bonar began in the same way. See introduction to Bonar's Hymns by his son.

the Bible was the sole reliable revelation of God. On the Bible, therefore, he based his every doctrine, from the Bible deduced every detail in his system of Church government. From the Bible he drew each principle of moral conduct, and from the Bible and the Bible alone, he derived everything which he suffered to be used in public worship. Hence his attitude to hymns. In his eyes the old Latin hymns like those of Luther and all other men were human, the psalter was divine. Wherever Calvin's influence extended, hymns were abandoned, the psalms and the psalms alone were sung. That is why the earliest hymns,—sometimes translations from Luther, sometimes original—which were tentatively produced in England and Scotland, were never sung in public. For though in each country the first attempts at reformation were inspired by Luther, in both countries the views on religion which ultimately prevailed, were those of Calvin. The thousands who gathered at St. Paul's Cross in the time of Elizabeth, met to sing psalms not hymns. For well nigh two centuries Protestants in England and Scotland sang psalms and psalms alone. From the first then, Lutherans sang hymns spontaneously: in England and in Scotland, hymns made their way into the service of the Church in the teeth of opposition. It was as though one who had been trained in the principles of "total abstinence" determined in later life to drink wine for dinner, whilst another had been brought up in a home in which beer had always been set on the table at every meal. The Lutheran sang hymns naively:

there never was a time in which he did not sing them. The Anglican like the Presbyterian took to hymn singing late in life after he had deliberately rejected Calvin's teaching—so long accepted—on this question. The Lutheran hymn appears when the Reformation is a new and glorious thing, the English hymn appears when the Reformation is already old, when some of the early hope and enthusiasm, the "first love" as the apostle called it, had already passed away. The Lutheran hymn issues from the heart of a united Church: the English hymn whether it be "Independent" or "Methodist" or "Anglican" comes from one section of a Church that has already been shattered into fragments.

There is, however, another difference between Luther and Calvin which is reflected in our hymns. Luther is the spiritual son of German mystics like Tauler and à Kempis: Calvin springs from the loins of Aquinas and the schoolmen. Luther underwent a dramatic experience, a spiritual upheaval. He was "converted." Everything he said or did in after years turned on this life-giving experience, this new "faith" that had come to him. He was not a man who moved easily in the realm of ideas: he had none of Calvin's relentless logic, lived in a world of vigorous deeds and strong emotion. God, not so much as He is in His inmost essence, but as He has revealed Himself in Christ, Christ's love for man and man's response to Christ—this is the heart of things for Luther. With Calvin it is otherwise. To speak in hyperbole, he is more interested in

Almighty God than he is in Jesus of Nazareth. He seeks to rise above the world of sense and time, goes behind redemption to the eternal "decrees" on which redemption depends, strives as it were to fathom the very mind of God. Had Calvin written hymns at all he would, like Ambrose, have written them in honour of the Trinity. He would have said little of man and man's experience: he would have said much of God and the will of God. It is then, the Calvinist *not* the Lutheran who emphasises thought at the expense of feeling, is rational rather than mystical, who prefers to dwell on the divine action on human life, rather than on the emotion to which this action inevitably gives rise.

All this serves to explain a feature in Lutheran hymns which at first occasions some surprise. In no country have men striven more zealously than they have done in Germany to win, through sheer hard thinking, a view of the universe that would satisfy the most exacting tests the intellect can impose. No Church has produced so much profound theology as the Lutheran Church, in which daring speculation on abstract themes has often been pursued at the expense of concrete fact. In no Church, does one meet with more bitter controversialists. Luther himself showered lusty blows on the heads of Romanist and Presbyterian alike; and many of his most devoted disciples have followed all too faithfully in their master's steps. Yet of intense interest in philosophy, and controversial theology there is scarcely a single trace in Lutheran Hymns. It is as though when men set forth to sing the praises of

their Lord, to express the love they bore him, they deliberately turned their backs on philosophic theory and religious strife, and sought in the most simple way to express the feelings of the humblest christian heart.

Hence it is that when we seek in worship to express our mystic feeling we turn to the Lutheran rather than to the Calvinist; when we desire detailed description of religious experience, we seek it in the hymns of the Lutheran rather than in the songs of the Presbyterian Church. We need both: the restraint of the one and the exuberance of the other, the adoring reverence which bows with awe unspeakable in the presence of the Most High God, and keen interest in the response which divine grace ever awakens in human hearts. But we cannot expect to find such different fruits growing on one and the selfsame tree.

Finally, Germany has suffered as England and Scotland have never done. Our shores have remained inviolate, whilst twice at least Germany has been a cock-pit. Her experiences during the Thirty Years' War, when grass grew in the streets of some of her greatest cities, when men and women learnt the meaning of hunger and pillage as we have never done, were not forgotten. Directly or indirectly, some of her greatest hymns are the outcome of those awful years. Some of her sweetest singers hymned the virtue of Christian resignation with unequalled power because they had learnt to practise it in the hardest and bitterest of all schools—the school of stern experience.

There are, says Schaff,[1] 100,000 German hymns of which a tenth are "well-known." Of these the Church Hymnary gives some 40 from 30 different pens. In a little book like this it is as impossible to give detailed analysis of 40 hymns, as to give biographies however short of 30 unknown men. Yet this does not matter greatly for those who read German will find the text of all the earliest hymns in Wackernagel[2], and that of the later hymns in Bunsen: will learn moreover all that is known concerning the hymns their authors and the effects they have produced in history from Koch[3] who has set it forth with German thoroughness. At the same time they will discover that nearly every statement made in any English work on German hymns is taken directly or indirectly from Koch. Those who do not read German will find most of their wants supplied by Kuebler. Here we shall follow the example set by Koch and Schaff and arrange hymns according to the period in which they were written.

I. Hymns of the Reformation Period (1524—1577).

Of those who have borne the vague, unsatisfactory name of "Protestant" Martin Luther is by far the greatest. He is as human as St. Peter, and knew by personal experience almost as much of the

[1] Article on German Hymnody in *Julian's Dictionary*.

[2] P. Wackernagel, *Das deutsche Kirchenlied*, 5 vols, Leipzig, 1864.

[3] E. E. Koch. *Geschichte des Kirchenlieds und Kirchengesangs*. 8 vols, 3rd Edition, Stuttgart, 1866.

meaning of "justifying faith" as did St. Paul. No man ever excelled him in the power to use vigorous and simple speech that went straight to the human heart. Of his 37 hymns, 3 are given in the Church Hymnary two of which are founded on psalms. "Ein feste Burg" (504) perhaps the noblest confession of confidence in God to be found in any language is based on the 46th psalm: "Aus tiefer Noth" (390), at once a cry for pardon, and a glad statement of firm trust that forgiveness follows penitence as surely as day follows night is based on the 130th psalm. "Vom Himmel hoch" (51) a lovely carol was written for his little boy.

Even earlier than Luther, dating indeed from pre-reformation times are the two verses of Laufenburg's hymn (292) which we use at baptism.

II. From the Formula of Concord to the Thirty Years' War (1577–1618).

The Formula of Concord, as its name implies, was an attempt to heal divisions in the Lutheran Church, to safeguard it against what was regarded as the two-fold error of Rome and Geneva; to set forth its doctrines—especially those concerned with the sacraments—with precision. One of the men who helped to draw up this celebrated document—he got little thanks and much abuse for his pains—was Nicolaus Selnecker. Of the 150 hymns which he wrote there is one in the Church Hymnary (266) beautifully translated by Robert Bridges. Selnecker

[1] Theodor Kuebler. *Historical notes to the Lyra Germanica.* London, 1865.

fought hard against Presbyterianism. Nicolai fought still harder. The pillar of Lutheranism in Hamburg he spoke of Presbyterians in the most violent and bitter terms. His diatribes are forgotten, and he is remembered now by his great hymn on the Second Coming (154) Wachet Auf!—set to a magnificent tune.

III. The Thirty Years' War (1618–1648).

From this said period we have three noble hymns. Altenburg's battle hymn (206) so deeply loved, so often used by the great Protestant champion Gustavus Adolphus who caused it to be sung by his whole army on the day on which he was slain at Lützen (1632). Löwenstern's prayer "Christe du Beistand" on which Pusey based "Lord of our Life and God of our Salvation" (205) the full force of which is felt only when we remember that it was written in time of war. Lastly there is Nun Danket (27) the "German Te Deum." For some time during the war Rinkart was pastor in a walled city into which poured a constant stream of fugitives. Disease broke out. Rinkart was left single-handed. During an epidemic he read the burial service over from forty to fifty people a day, over between four and five thousand in all (three thousand others were buried in trenches without religious service of any kind). Rinkart knew something of the horrors of war. "Now thank we all our God" is the exultant cry with which he greets the proclamation of peace. Even if it be true as some suggest that this glorious hymn wedded to equally glorious music is but a

paraphrase of Ecclus, 50, 22–24 that it was intended to be used as a "Grace before Meat" yet it ranks with the Old Hundred and the Te Deum as one of the very greatest hymns of praise and has been used over and over again, not only in Germany but in other lands as well, to express devout thanksgiving for special blessing received at the hand of God.

IV. From the Close of the Thirty Years' War to the Rise of Pietism, 1648–1680.

None can pass through the furnace of affliction and come forth unchanged. Nations like individuals emerge from such an ordeal more sensitive or more callous, more religious or less devout. On most Germans the effects of the Thirty Years' War were simply disastrous. Their moral sense was blunted, their interest in religion less. Their minds were dazed; their senses numbed. Those who hoped that the religious life of the nation would be quickened and purified as the result of the war were doomed to disappointment. There was no new gospel on men's lips. Preachers fell fack on outworn shibboleths. Sermons were filled with dull conventional dogmas enlivened by venomous attack on those (like the Calvinists) who refused to accept them. This is the dark side of the picture; but there is another. Some men were touched by the suffering they had seen, the sorrows they had known, and from this dark post-war period arose some of the sweetest and most famous of German hymns Gerhardt—greatest of German hymn-writers—sensitive, devout, is the "St. Bernard" of Germany.

As we shall see later, it is no mere accident that John Wesley translated two of his finest hymns. "O Jesus Christ, mein schönstes Licht" (413). In the Church Hymnary, Gerhardt is represented by two other hymns, a Xmas hymn (48) "All my heart this night rejoices," and a beautiful evensong (it is hardly a hymn) (275) which we have in Bridge's fine translation. Best of all the noble passion Chorale "O Sacred head once wounded" one of the greatest hymns in all the world based on part of that series of medieval hymns[1] which addresses the feet, the hands, the side, the head, of Christ in turn. To this period belongs Franck's sacramental hymn "Deck thyself my soul with gladness" (306) and Neumark's song of resignation "If thou but suffer God to guide thee" (519). In hymns of this period which marks the transition from the older and more objective hymns to those of a peculiarly subjective pietistic type, we have orthodox Lutheranism at its best, mystical, devout, subjective, somewhat sentimental yet filled with deep sincere love for Christ.

More mystical than Gerhardt (and the typical Lutheran) is Schenck, who is represented by a lovely hymn (beautifully translated by F. E. Cox) about the Saints (211). But Schenck's mysticism is as nothing compared with that of Scheffler. Two hymns "Thee will I love my strength, my tower" (412), "O love who formedst me to wear" (477), represent the work of that extraordinary man who sacrificed rank (he was a Polish noble) to become

[1] "Salve caput cruentatum" commonly (though wrongfully) ascribed to St. Bernard.

a Lutheran; soon came to feel that the cold orthodoxy of the day would never satisfy his hungry heart, turned to the Jesuits then famed for mysticism and fought bitterly on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church. Yet whatever name he bore, to whatever Church for the time being he belonged, he was from first to last a mystic.

Koch quotes (Vol. IV, p. 3) the typical prayer which he composed and used throughout a long illness as he awaited death "Jesus and Christ, God and Man, Bridegroom and Brother, Peace and Joy, Sweetness and Pleasure, Refuge and Redemption, Heaven and Earth, Eternity and Time, Love and All, receive my Soul."

V. From the Rise of Pietism to the Rise of "Rationalism" (1680—1757).

In view of the immense influence which German Pietism has exerted on the religious thought and life of England, it is somewhat strange that no English scholar has yet dealt with the subject. In the first instance "Pietist" was a term of contempt applied to a certain group in the Lutheran Church, who rebelled against the cold dead orthodoxy of the day, and set forth to advocate a warmer and more spiritual kind of religion. They turned from the study of scholastic theology to the Bible, gave up all kinds of "worldly" amusement, read their Bibles and attended prayer-meetings assiduously, founded orphanages (some of which continue to exist) awakened interest in Foreign Missions, founded the University of Halle, translated and

distributed the Bible in foreign lands. Through their spiritual descendants,—direct or indirect,—the Moravian Brethren, the Wesleyan Methodists, the Evangelical party in the Church of England, the Salvation Army,—German pietists have exerted a deep influence on English religious life. In the Church Hymnary they are represented by Bogatzky's missionary hymn (360) Katharina von Schlegel's beautiful hymn of trust "Be still my soul" (532), and Zinzendorf's[1] "Jesus still lead on" (544).

The Reformed, or Presbyterian Church in Germany produced three notable hymn-writers, two of whom were of the "Pietistic" type. Neander at once lover of Nature and of Nature's God proved that a man might be at one and the same time both happy and devout. "Praise to the Lord" (21) is a jubilant song, and "All my hope on God is founded" (425) is a noble expression of joyful faith. Though Tersteegen never actually renounced his Presbyterian Faith, never actually withdrew from the Church, his real work was done in those religious assemblies then known as "conventicles" which were the hall-mark of the pietistic school. No Lutheran pietist ever excelled Tersteegen in writing hymns. His great hymns "Thou hidden love of God" (437), "God reveals his Presence" (223), "Spirit of Grace" (181) have been received with enthusiasm by almost every section of the Church.

[1] A brief account of Pietism will be found in my essay "The Pietist" in *Swarf*.

VI. The Age of Rationalism (1757—1817).

The pendulum swings. After the Pietists who disparaged the intellect came the Rationalists who almost deified it. Emotion gave way to hard cold commonsense. Said the astronomer who turned his telescope to the heavens, "I find no God there." In this dark period in which religion fell to a very low ebb indeed, there are two hymnwriters. Gellert—to whom Goethe and Schiller owed not a little—disputes with Gerhardt the chief place in German hymnody. His "Jesus lives" (117) is often sung at German funerals. Claudius wrote a "peasant song" (it was scarcely intended to be a hymn), "We plough the fields" (591), which is heard at almost every harvest festival.

VII. The Modern Period (1817—1927).

During the 19th century the Lutheran Church steadily lost ground in Germany. It is pathetic to attend divine service in a church which could easily seat 2,000, where there are but 60 worshippers of whom a considerable proportion are children. Modern Germany may be interested in Christ, she has little interest in the "Evangelical" (or Lutheran Church). Spitta—"O happy home" (621)—is supposed to be the best nineteenth century hymnist, though Oswald, a devout civil servant—"O let him whose sorrow" (520)—is not without admirers.

How soon Latin ceased to be a spoken language, it is difficult to determine. Yet we may say with confidence that from very early times the services

of the Church must have been almost unintelligible to the majority of those who attended them. The ordinary man neither knew nor appreciated the great Latin hymns: priests, monks and a few educated laymen; these and these alone could understand them. The congregational hymn as we know it now we owe almost entirely to Martin Luther. The contributions made by the Lutheran Church to Christian hymnody are valuable and extensive; the greatest gift however is the example which Luther set, and the spirit in which his followers carried on the work of their illustrious master—the "father of the congregational hymn."

The English Hymn

I. HYMNS OF XVIIIth CENTURY.

A. Hymns of the Puritans.

In every country to which Calvin's influence extended the psalms and the psalms alone were used in public praise. In England this state of things continued for two hundred years; and, till the "anglican chant" was invented a metrical version of the psalms was almost invariably employed. In the sixteenth century, when metrical psalms were a novelty, men had sung them with enthusiasm: but by the 18th century much of this enthusiasm had passed away. The psalms were "lined": that is to say the clerk read out the first line and the congregation sang it, after which clerk and congregation proceeded to deal with each succeeding line in a similar way. It was a dreary business. The spirit of the eighteenth century was strongly averse to anything in the nature of "enthusiasm," and the clerk, often uneducated, seldom possessed the religious feeling which his position required. Those were the days when the sermon was felt to be of more importance than the service, when the devotional "preliminaries" had to be got through somehow before the sermon—which as often as not was an essay on morality, or on some point of "natural" theology—could be preached.

In dissenting chapels, which though declared to be illegal at the Restoration, continued to exist throughout the period of persecution and began to multiply with the advent of William III and the Toleration Act, the "lining" was done by the pastor. The Presbyterian ministers—in those days perhaps the most intellectual of the clergy—were more infected than any others by the "Deism" or as we should now term it the Unitarianism, of the day, and were more interested in bringing the doctrines of the Westminster Confession into harmony with what was then regarded as "modern thought" than in seeking to improve the service of praise.

The "Independents" were more orthodox, but among them too the singing was slovenly and the metrical psalter poor. More than one good man felt that this state of things should not continue. Richard Baxter, for instance, in this respect as in so many others, in advance of his age, desired a hymn book, and there *were* hymns though they were little used. Nor was any *radical* change effected till the appearance of Isaac Watts. The story is often told of how Watts—then a mere stripling—complained of the quality of the material used in the praise of God, and was politely told that his criticism would be of greater value if he would show how the work of others might be improved. This conversation marks a turning point in English hymnody for it led to the appearance of Watts's first hymn.

Watts reminds us of Wordsworth in two respects. In the first place he had a clear and definite idea of what he set out to accomplish a radical theory which

he stated in terms which will always command respect. In the second place he had, like Wordsworth, such little power of self criticism, that whilst his finest hymns are the greatest in the English language, his poorest work is so bad that not even his most devoted admirer would venture to defend it.

From the very beginning the Christian Church has used the psalms as her chief means of rendering praise to God. Despite this fact, however, the Psalter is a Hebrew not a Christian book. The medieval church overcame the difficulty, bridged the chasm which separates the New Covenant from the Old by interpreting the Psalms in a "mystical" sense. Those who are interested to learn the strange meanings which medieval churchmen read into the Psalter can easily satisfy their curiosity by consulting Neale and Littledale's well-known work. At times their interpretation is beautiful, at times quaint and ingenious: more often it is simply absurd; in nearly every instance it utterly ignores the thoughts and feelings of the Psalmists.

Calvin, the prince of commentators, was too honest to misread the bible in this ingenious fashion and taught his disciples to read the sacred text in a simple straightforward way. Yet when he insisted that psalms and psalms alone should be employed in public worship, he placed his followers in a difficult position, deprived the churches which came under his influence of the means of expressing emotion and experience, peculiar to the Christian. For whilst those feelings which the Christian shares with men

of every other faith are nowhere so nobly expressed as in the psalter, on such themes as immortality the psalmists themselves are divided, of such subjects as the sacraments they say nothing, concerning such feelings as the love the Christian bears to Christ they are entirely silent. From the Christian standpoint then the psalms say at once too much and too little. They speak of revenge in a way forbidden to the Christian, regard the destruction of an enemy, whether he be a grown up man or a little child, with an enthusiasm that finds small encouragement in the Sermon on the Mount. At the same time they are silent on what to Christians are the most vital things.

This then was the problem which Isaac Watts set himself to solve, and he reached his solution along two different lines. Instead of making a metrical psalter which adhered as closely as possible to the Hebrew text, as all his predecessors had done, he made a paraphrase which whilst it ignored historic events whose interest seemed ephemeral, and imperfect moral ideas which had been for ever superseded by the Sermon on the Mount, christianised the old Hebrew poets, and turned them, to some extent at least, into eighteenth century "Independents." Watts had many critics who objected to what they termed his "attempt to improve on David;" but though most of his "psalms" have perished, some will be sung as long as the English language endures.

But Watts went further. It was the custom then as now, to follow the sermon with an act of praise, and the practice grew up—its author is unknown—of composing a hymn which was specially intended

to drive home the truth the preacher had been seeking to enforce. Watts was an "Independent" minister, and many of his hymns were written with this end in view. This explains some of their characteristic features. As a rule they are much shorter than German and Latin hymns for those who sang them possessed no printed copy of the words. They were given out if not line by line, at least verse by verse, and were deliberately written in words which an ordinary congregation could easily understand. There is no subtlety in them. Their author makes no attempt to embellish them with graces which might appeal to the intelligentsia but would leave the ordinary worshipper unmoved. They are "scriptural" in the sense in which that term was understood before the Higher Criticism appeared. They were written for "Independents," for Calvinists that is to say of a moderate type, more tolerant than Anglicans much more tolerant than Presbyterians of an elder generation, for men who belonged to no "Church" but believed that each little congregation of believers was an independent entity, in which Christ was present—which under Christ's personal guidance was fully competent to manage its own affairs.

Watts is far too great a man to be described exhaustively by any label. His greatest hymns are of universal interest, express emotions common to all who believe in Christ. Yet we do him but small injustice if we regard him as a typical Puritan. Whatever it be[1], whatever its merits and defects,

[1] A short account of "Puritanism" is given in *Swarf*.

Puritanism has left an indelible mark alike on English history and on English character, and it is the Puritan who has washed his hands of the blood with which they were once imbued, who has grown more tolerant with advancing years, who has learnt to distinguish between the permanent and the ephemeral elements in those things for which his fathers fought, who comes to life in Watt's hymns. In Watts there is a manly vigour, a joyful and buoyant trust in God, which no other hymn writer has excelled. "When I survey" (103), "Jesus shall reign" (372), "There is a land of pure delight" (564), "O God our help" (575) will last as long as the language in which they are written. To these great hymns must be added those on which two of the finest Scottish Paraphrases are based: "Blest morning whose first dawning rays" (111, Par. 61) "How bright these glorious spirits shine (210, Par. 66).

Philip Doddridge; friend, and in some sense disciple of Isaac Watts, whom he "excells in simplicity and tenderness though not in strength" is another representative of English Puritanism. His hymns written for use after sermon were not published till his death. His great communion hymn, "My God and is Thy table spread" was soon adopted by the Church of England. "Ye servants of the Lord" (150) is constantly sung to-day. "Great God we sing" (578) is often used at the beginning of the year. By Presbyterians his name will ever be revered since two of his hymns form the basis of two of the most magnificent of "Scottish

Paraphrases" "O God of Bethel" (539 Par. 2). "Hark the glad sound" (37 Par. 39).

Two other Nonconformists deserve attention. Joseph Hart had led a wild sort of life before he was converted in a Moravian Chapel. He was then forty-five. Two years later he became the minister of an "Independent" Church. He regarded himself as a "brand snatched from the burning" and this, together with the fact that his conversion occurred so late in life, may explain the impassioned earnestness which marks his hymns. "Come Holy Spirit come" (177) is a beautiful prayer to the Holy Ghost. "Come ye sinners poor and wretched" (377) a fervent appeal to the unsaved.

To another Congregationalist minister—Simon Browne—whose sad experiences unhinged his mind, we owe another beautiful prayer to the Holy Ghost, "Come gracious Spirit" (179); whilst to Robert Robinson, barber's apprentice, Baptist minister, historian—one of the most remarkable men of his age—we owe the stirring hymn, "Come thou fount of every blessing" (416).

Watts and his school have given us some of our greatest hymns, Evangelical but not sentimental, free from narrow dogmatism yet adhering closely to the central verities of the Christian faith, they were the work of men who lived in close contact with the people for whose use they were at first composed. These old Puritan divines, as learned as they were devout, cast into the common treasury of the church, gifts which have been excelled in value by those of no other body of men.

B. Hymns of the Pietists.

(1) Wesleyan or Arminian School.

It is sometimes said that John Wesley was the greatest Englishman of the eighteenth century. Such judgments are ever vain, for there are many kinds of greatness. Yet in the sphere of religious activity his supremacy is unchallenged. That he ranks with Luther and Calvin few would dare to affirm. His was an easier task and he was a lesser man. These giants grappled with the mightiest church the world had seen and sought to overthrow it. Wesley strove to reform, or rather, to revive religious life in the Church of England. He is neither the kinsman nor the peer of Luther and Calvin; he *is* the kinsman of the German pietists. For as they were distressed at the lethargy of the Lutheran Church, so he was distressed at the lifeless apathy of the Church of England. As they sought to quicken religious life through "conventicles" so he strove to awaken men through his "societies."

Neither the German pietist nor the Wesleys meant to become "sectaries." Charles Wesley died an Anglican priest and was carried to his grave by brother clergymen, and when he founded a church outside the church of his faith and baptism, John Wesley yielding to force of circumstance, did something to which his every instinct was opposed.

English Methodism, like German pietism, set out to quicken religious life within the borders of the national church. But this is not their only point of contact. At Oxford John Wesley sought to

satisfy the hunger of his heart by ascetic practices and the study of mystical divines, yet knew no peace of mind till after some intercourse with Moravian missionaries and the reading of Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans, he came to entertain those extremely "Evangelical" views which are associated with his name. "Mr. John and Mr. Charles Wesley," says one of his biographers, "with all their excellencies, were neither holy nor happy till they were taught by Peter Bohler that men are saved from sin, its guilt, dominion and misery, by faith in Christ." When he set forth to evangelise England it was a Moravian rather than an Anglican gospel he proclaimed. The "enthusiasm" which eighteenth century England so much resented, and the emphasis on personal experience of redeeming grace, were derived from German pietists rather than from the Anglican Church. Of Wesley's amazing energy and the success which crowned his evangelistic efforts, of his power to organise and to bend men to his will, of his great qualities and his defects in heart and mind, and of the world-wide influence he exerts to-day through the church which bears his name—this is not the place to speak: for we are solely concerned with his attitude to hymns. In 1738 the first Methodist "society" was formed at the Moravian chapel in Fetter Lane, and in the same year John Wesley published the first Wesleyan collection of psalms and hymns. To this and subsequent collections he contributed several translations of German hymns. Of these there are four in the Church Hymnary,

one from Scheffler "Thee will I love" (412), two from Gerhardt "Jesus Thy boundless love to me" (413), and "Commit thou all thy griefs" (524 and 525), and one from Tersteegen "Thou hidden love of God" (437). As editor he pruned some of his brother's too exuberant work, and incidentally altered one of Watts's hymns (218, "Before Jehovah's awful throne"). In a preface which reminds us that he was always an autocrat and had been in earlier years an Oxford don he says, "In these hymns there is no doggerel, no botches, nothing put in to patch up the rhyme; no feeble expletives, here is nothing turgid or bombastic, on the one hand; or low and creeping on the other. Here are no cant expressions, no words without meaning. Here are (allow me to say) both the purity, the strength, and the elegance of the English language, and, at the same time, the utmost simplicity and plainness, suited to every capacity."

Charles Wesley, who contributed most of the hymns to the book, is a much more loveable man than his illustrious brother. He wrote in all, 6500 hymns, and perhaps no one who wrote so much maintained so high a level. It would be easy to quote many verses which ill deserve the praise bestowed upon them by his brother John or the claim that none of the men who borrowed them for use in other hymn books was able "to mend either the sense or the verse," for even Homer nods, and Charles Wesley was not a Homer. But his best hymns are amongst the greatest in the English language: "Jesus Lover of my Soul" (394), "Love

Divine all loves excelling" (457), "Soldiers of Christ arise" (511), "O for a thousand tongues to sing" (156), "Rejoice the Lord is King" (129), "Let saints on earth" (216), "Oh for a heart" (449), "Come, O Thou Traveller unknown" (399), to say nothing of the advent hymn "Come thou long expected Jesus" (143), the Christmas hymn "Hark the herald angels sing" (41) and the Easter hymn "Christ the Lord is risen to-day" (113) are sure of admission into any English collection.

From Thomas Olivers, once a shoemaker, afterwards one of Wesley's preachers, we have "The God of Abraham praise" (548), a version of the Hebrew Yigdol.

Edward Perronet, son of an Anglican vicar, author of "The Mitre" a most amusing satire on the church of his time, friend of the Wesleys—though he did not die a Methodist—is the author of the well-known hymn "All hail the power of Jesus' Name" (133).

Here we must pause for a moment to say a word concerning a most difficult subject; since it not only explains the cleavage in the ranks of English pietists, the bitter quarrel for instance between John Wesley and Toplady, but brings into relief certain peculiar qualities in Charles Wesley's hymns. All Christians are agreed that salvation depends upon divine grace and human effort, but when the relation between these two factors is examined, opinion is sharply divided. The conflict about free-will is a very old one and early made its appearance in the Christian church. In modern times it is

chiefly associated with two men, Calvin and Arminius. Calvin laid such stress on God's omnipotence and of man's utter inability to do anything to save his soul, that some have felt that he left no room for any kind of freedom. Arminius, a Dutch theologian, revolting against Calvinistic doctrine, emphasised man's power to contribute to his salvation. To the Arminian the Calvinist appeared a fatalist: to the Calvinist the Arminian seemed to exalt man's power at the expense of the sovereign will of God. The Wesleys were Arminians, and this led many who agreed with them in their desire to evangelise the country and to develop a more "spiritual" type of Christian life than that which prevailed in the national church, to part company with them, at times on good terms, at times on bad.

(2) Calvinistic Hymns.

(*a*) Moravian.

In a preface to his sermons John Cennick gives a vivid account of his life, tells how he was brought into contact with the Wesleys, became a master in their school at Kingston, a preacher in their "meetings," separated from them because he could not accept their Arminian views and joined the Moravians. "While I was testifying Christ died for all," says Charles Wesley in his diary (31-10-1740) "in the hearing of many, Mr. Cennick gave me the lie." He dedicated his hymn book ("Sacred hymns for the children of God in the days of their Pilgrimage") to "Jesus of Nazareth, friend of sinners."

Cennick, who was a thorough Pietist, maintained

that his hymns were written by "a child," that they made no claim to be regarded as poetry, or to contain "pleasing expressions," but were merely "the simple breathings of the souls seeking after Jesus." To Cennick we owe the beautiful evening hymn, "Ere I sleep" (282), "Children of the heavenly King" (549), the well-known grace "Be present at our table, Lord" (628), and part of the glorious advent hymn "Lo He comes with clouds descending"[1] (153).

(*b*) Anglican.

"John Newton, clerk. Once an infidel and libertine. A servant of slaves in Africa Was by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Preserved, restored, pardoned And appointed to preach the faith he Had long laboured to destroy." This epitaph written by his own hand reveals at once the main events in Newton's life, and the essence of his theology. After a wild life as a sailor he became a clergyman and ministered in the parish of Olney. A neighbouring vicar (who eventually became a leading light in the "Evangelical" party) said, "I looked upon his religious sentiments as rank fanaticism," and we may feel certain that most of the Anglican clergy were of the same opinion. As for the parishioners, whilst some were deeply affected, the majority remained unmoved. Newton himself said that he would not have left Olney "had not so incorrigible a spirit prevailed in a

[1] Vv. 1 and 2 and part of v. 4 are by Wesley; v. 3 and the closing words of v. 4 by Cennick.

parish he had long laboured to reform." In later days, as a London vicar, he was grieved "to see so few of his wealthy parishioners come to church." Newton—a sound calvinist—had no doubt of his salvation.

"We may, like the ships
By tempests be tost
On perilous deeps
But cannot be lost."

None the less he never could forget his past sins, and was always filled with grief at the slowness of his spiritual progress.

"Joy is a fruit that will not grow
In Nature's barren soil."[1]

"What a mournful life is mine
Filled with crosses, pains and cares!"[2]

We are not surprised, therefore, to hear men ask if this gloomy pietist was the best friend that William Cowper could have found. A true poet, though not a great one, Cowper, was one of the most sensitive of men. When he was summoned to an interview to decide his election to the post of clerk to the Journals of the House of Lords, he was so upset that he tried to commit suicide with "laudanum, knife and cord." For eight years he lived in Olney, where he not only assiduously attended the parish church, took part in exciting prayer meetings, but spent most of his time in the somewhat gloomy society of John Newton. If he had had brighter company, he might have been

[1] Memoirs of John Newton p. 123, Bk. 1, Hymn 42.
[2] Hymn 51.

less ready to attempt suicide; less prone to imagine that he had sinned so deeply that forgiveness was impossible. Whether it was well or ill for Cowper that he met Newton and was so much affected by his influence, it is not for us to determine, for our concern is with the fact that Newton and Cowper between them composed the celebrated Olney hymns.

"Perspicuity, simplicity and ease—so runs the famous preface—should be attended to, the imagery and colouring of poetry should be indulged very sparingly." Cowper, the most important poet who has written hymns, merely reproduces Newton's doctrine, and is at times obviously hampered by the conditions laid down that "the style and manner suited to the composition of hymns . . . may be more successfully . . . attained by a versifier than a poet." Yet though there is little joy in Cowper's hymns, though his pietism is of the anxious and somewhat introspective kind, he has expressed certain aspects of Christian experience with a grace that has never been excelled. "God moves in a mysterious way" (28), "The Spirit breathes upon the word" (188), "Jesus where'er Thy people meet" (236), "Hark my soul" (400), "Sometimes a light surprises" (420), "O for a closer walk with God" (436), are hymns which will always find a welcome at devotional meetings.

Newton's hymns are much more numerous than those of Cowper and are of far less even quality. Yet his three great hymns in praise of Jesus, "One there is above all others" (139), "Sweeter sounds than music knows" (161), "How sweet the name of

Jesus sounds" (402), will bear comparison with any hymns on the same subject. His noble hymn on the Church "Glorious things of thee are spoken" (197), the beautiful prayer "Now may He who from the dead" (288), and the song of the mercy-seat (430), are enough to secure John Newton a permanent place in any collection of hymns.

We have seen that Calvinists disliked some of Wesley's views. To Toplady, author of the immortal hymn "Rock of Ages" (393), Wesley was the incarnation of that Arminianism which he abhorred "I do not expect to be treated by Mr. John Wesley with the candour of a gentleman or the meekness of a Christian; but I wish him, for his reputation's sake to write and act with the honesty of a heathen." Such is the tone in which Toplady addressed his foe. He rose from his death-bed and preached a last sermon on behalf of the Calvinism in which he so passionately believed, against the man who had presumed to disparage it. "I am everyday in view of dissolution . . . I most sincerely hope that my last hours will be much better employed than in conversing with such a man." Toplady's controversial writings make sorry reading, his diary is much more interesting. Its title "Short memorials of God's gracious Dealings with my Soul in a Way of Spiritual Experience from December 6th, 1767," sufficiently indicates its nature. It is filled with "the language of Canaan" and describes at length Toplady's experiences as devout believer and earnest Christian minister. In the Church Hymnary the great Wesleyan hymn

"Jesus lover of my soul," and the great Calvinist hymn "Rock of Ages" are printed side by side, and perhaps this is the best comment that could be passed on the old quarrel. Though "Rock of Ages" is by far the best known of Toplady's hymns, we still sing "Your harps ye trembling saints" (537), and "A Sovereign Protector I have" (538).

The hymns of the eighteenth century are the greatest of English hymns. They may lack the technique, the finished workmanship of the best of those which were produced in the nineteenth century, yet they have greater power. They are the noblest expression of that type of religion which men call "Evangelical" in its twofold form, Puritanism and Pietism. On the whole the Puritan was a bigger man than the Pietist, faced life with courage, often played a manly part in what the Greeks termed political life. The Pietist gave more attention to the cultivation of the spiritual life in himself and others. "God keep me from being a mere scholar" said Toplady. Of literature in general and of classical literature in particular, John Newton said, "I began to think that life was too short, especially my life, to admit of such elaborate trifling. Neither poet nor historian could tell me a word of Jesus." There are who cut off the right hand, pluck out the right eye that they may enter heaven, and to that number these men belonged. Of Pietist and Puritan alike, we may feel assured not only that they entered heaven, but that by their songs they did not a little to help many and many a man to reach the heavenly city too.

Nineteenth Century Hymns

A. Anglican.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Church of England was poorly supplied with hymns. In most churches the metrical psalms were still sung. Where hymns were used at all, they were borrowed from Dissenters or taken from men like Newton and Cowper who were anything but typical representatives of their Church. Long before the nineteenth century ended metrical psalms were abolished, hymns were universally used, and Anglican clergymen had taken the foremost place not only in the study and compilation, but also in the production of hymns.

The adjective generally employed to describe the Church of England is "comprehensive." Elizabeth strove manfully to make her Church comprehensive and comprehensive it has remained. Yet it is this very quality which makes Anglicanism so difficult to analyse and almost impossible to define. In the same diocese are to be found clergymen whose views and practices closely approximate to those of Rome, and others who are Plymouth Brethren in all but name. Under the rule of the same Bishop are those who entertain the most liberal opinions with regard

to Church and Scripture, and those who read the Scriptures and understand Church dogmas in the narrowest and most literal way. Whilst no label can ever describe a man exactly, we may for present purposes divide the men to whom we owe such a large portion of the Church Hymnary into four well-known groups. First there are "High Churchmen" who belong to the "Catholic " school of thought. Next there are "Low Churchmen" who claim to be evangelical. In the third place are the "Broad Churchmen," sometimes called Liberals, sometimes Modernists, and lastly, there is the central party to which in the nineteenth century the great mass of English churchmen belonged.

(1) Hymns of the High Church Party.

The Romantic movement which swept over Europe in the early years of the nineteenth century took many forms. In our own country, it expressed itself in two different ways. On the one hand there was the "return to nature": on the other the re-discovery and rehabilitation of the Middle Ages. To the eighteenth century the Middle Ages were the "dark ages": to the nineteenth century they were the "ages of faith." How far Sir Walter Scott was responsible for the change it is difficult to say: but that he had a large share in preparing the way for the Oxford movement there can be no doubt.

From the very first the Church of England tried to stand midway between Rome and Geneva. If the thirty-nine articles are Protestant, the material of which the Prayer Book is composed is largely

drawn from medieval breviaries, and the Anglican form of service is modelled on that of the medieval Church. Anyone who takes the trouble to compare the Prayer Book with the breviary and the missal will see at once how closely "Morning Prayer" follows the old choir offices of Matins and Lauds, how much of the Communion Service comes straight from the missal. In the eighteenth century men were wont to emphasise the "Protestant" side of the Church of England: the Oxford movement set out to emphasise the "Catholic" side. Hence the stress laid on "episcopal succession," the Sacraments, the observance of Saints' Days, the teaching of the Fathers and so forth. In the eyes of these men the "Reformation" was as much a curse as a blessing, all "modern" thought anathema: and they deliberately sought to restore the faith and worship of the "early Church."

Hence their attitude to hymns. They disliked metrical psalms, they disliked still more perhaps the hymns of Watts and Wesley, and turned adoring eyes to the hymns of the "early Church." Hence it is that to these men, some of whom remained in the Church of England, some of whom entered the Church of Rome, we owe most of our translations of the Latin hymns. Of their number John Mason Neale is the best known. He was saturated in medievalism, and was a most gifted translator: though he never hesitated to take liberties with his text, and drew upon himself severe criticism from Roman Catholics who said that by omitting vital parts of medieval doctrine such as the adoration of

the Virgin Mary, he sometimes turned "Catholic" into purely "Anglican" hymns.

Neale was like the pre-Raphaelites. He saw the Middle Ages through rose-tinted spectacles, as men in later life ascribe to school-days a happiness they never really possessed. How far Neale's sentimentalism vitiated his judgment and marred his work, is too large a question for us to discuss. Enough to recognise with grateful thanks the debt we owe the man who gave us "Jerusalem the golden" (572), "The strain upraise" (12), "All glory, laud and honour" (88), "O come, O come Immanuel" (142), "Art thou weary" (375).

The Oxford movement produced a poet. Keble is inferior to Cowper, still more to Milton the poet of Puritanism or Dante the poet of Catholicism. Compared with these giants, their hearts aflame with heavenly fire, he is bloodless and insipid. Yet the Christian Year was popular and provided the English Church with pleasing meditations on fast and festival. If he never rises very high, Keble never falls very low. From the Christian Year centos have been taken to form hymns. "O timely happy" (247), "Sun of my soul" (280), "Blest are the pure in heart" (459), "When God of old came down from heaven" (172), "There is a book" (9),—though far from being great hymns are not without their uses; and of all marriage hymns none is more popular than that which Keble wrote in his old age "The voice that breathed o'er Eden" (310).

There are other writers of the High Church school. T. B. Pollock, who is associated with the Litany

type of hymn (200, 383 and 445); W. C. Dix, a layman much influenced by Littledale's "Eastern Liturgies" who wrote "As with gladness men of old" (60), "Alleluia, sing to Jesus" (132) and "Come unto Me, ye weary" (374), and Miss Rossetti (of whom we shall speak a little later). But on the whole the chief service which the High Church party rendered was the translation of Latin hymns, and the provision they made for the observance of the various fasts and feasts of the Church Year; for there are and always will be, those who prefer to think of Christian truth in parts than to attempt to regard it as a whole.

(2) Low Church Hymns.

In the evangelical party two men are conspicuous, the first as author of a very popular hymn, the other as compiler of a popular hymnal.

Whether we agree with Ellerton in thinking that "Abide with me" (273) is better used at a funeral than at a Sunday evening service, however out of place we feel such an intensely individualistic hymn to be on the lips say of a football crowd, there is no doubt that it is one of our most popular hymns, and that it fully deserves the popularity which it enjoys. The best of Lyte's other hymns are based on the Psalter, "Praise the Lord, His glories show" (15) is based on Psalm 150; "Praise my soul the King of heaven" (20) is based on Psalm 103, and "Pleasant are Thy courts above" on Psalm 84. There is nothing morbid in Lyte:

indeed his best hymns are more full of jubilant praise than those of almost any other Anglican.

Bishop Bickersteth who compiled the well-known Hymnal Companion was himself the author of a number of hymns. Of these thirty are said to be in common use, and of the thirty, three are well-known. The Communion hymn, "Till He come" (308), the stirring missionary hymn, "For My sake and the gospel's, go" (362), and the somewhat plaintive "Peace, perfect peace" (423).

It is with some hesitation that we include Thomas Kelly in this list, for though he began life as an Irish Episcopalian minister, he was rather too "evangelical" and unchurchly even for that evangelical Church. Yet of modern evangelicals, few equal Kelly at his best. "We sing the praise of Him who died" (107), "The Lord is risen indeed" (115), "The Head that once was crowned with thorns" (124), "Look ye saints the sight is glorious" (130) are all splendid hymns, full of joy and equally full of love for Christ. Other evangelicals, though of a much less robust order, are Stowell "Jesus is our Shepherd" (529), and two laymen, Edmeston, a devout architect whose "Saviour, breathe an evening blessing" (272) and "Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us (540) are often sung, and Canton, for many years associated with the Religious Tract Society "Hold Thou my hands" (533).

(3) Broad Church Hymns.

In the Church of England the small body of liberals has always been conspicuous for intellectual

ability, and if their hymns are somewhat disappointing, as indeed they are, this is largely due to the fact that a hymn-writer like a poet, is born not made.

No Anglican excels Milman in literary grace. His Palm Sunday hymn "Ride on, ride on in majesty" (90) explains why Heber loved Milman's work, for Heber and Milman have much in common. "When our heads" (315) and "O help us Lord" (434) are tender descriptions of Christ's sympathy. Stanley, an equally brilliant dean, is less successful with his hymns. Neither "O Master it is good to be" (87) which deals with the Transfiguration, nor "He is gone—beyond the skies!" (122), which was written to help a little child to understand the Ascension, would be greatly missed if it were omitted.

When he was an assistant master at Harrow, Farrar wrote a Christmas Carol for the boys of that school (39). The only point of interest about it is that unlike Miss Rossetti who suggests with the mystics that Christ was born when snow was on the ground, Farrar asserts with the realists that the flocks "lay on the dewy ground." Like other liberals Ainger was more interested in the "Kingdom of God" than in the Church, as his "God is working His purpose out" (363) plainly shows.

To the same school belongs Hatch's "Breathe on me, breath of God" (183), Kingsley's hymn for hospitals, "From Thee all skill" (337) and Percy Dearmer's prayer (385). George Macdonald was wont to describe himself as a lay member of the Church of England, and that is why his hymn

"O Lord of life" (253) is mentioned here. Thomas Hughes, author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, another Churchman of this type, is represented by "O God of Truth" (508).

(4) Hymns of the "Central" Party.

Most hymns in this group were written by clergymen almost all of whom belonged to the middle or upper middle class. Some of them had been to public schools, all of them to Oxford or Cambridge. None of them ever forgot that before all else he was a Christian gentleman. None of them ever wrote a great hymn, none an altogether bad one. Christopher Wordsworth, one of the group, said that the first duty of a hymn writer was to teach sound doctrine, and these hymns are always orthodox if often conventional. Like the Prayer Book whose services so many of them are written to illustrate, they are pitched for the most part in a minor key. It was to such men Newman[1] addressed his bitter words "I give you credit for what you are, grave, serious, earnest, modest, steady, self-denying, consistent; you have the praise of such virtues . . . but if I wished to find what was striking, extraordinary, suggestive of Catholic heroism . . . I should betake myself to them (i.e. the Methodists), rather than to you."

Among the early writers of this school the best known name is that of Heber: of later writers, Ellerton and Walsham How are the most popular.

Reginald Heber, a friend of poets and almost a

[1] "Lectures on certain difficulties felt by Anglicans." J. H. Newman, Lect. 3, p. 75. Burns and Lambert, 1850.

poet himself, conceived the idea when he was squire and vicar at Hodnet of compiling a hymn book which would illustrate the passages read at Communion from the Gospels and Epistles. He saw that people loved to sing hymns, and wanted to form and use a collection of *Anglican* hymns. But in 1820 neither the Bishop of London nor the Archbishop of Canterbury would allow this to be done. Yet though his hymn book was not published till after his death in India, Heber wrote several hymns. One for Trinity Sunday: "Holy, Holy, Holy" (1): one for Epiphany, an apostrophe to a star, "Brightest and best" (61): one for the first Sunday after Epiphany, "By cool Siloam's shady rill" (294): one for a missionary meeting—he wrote it in less than twenty minutes—"From Greenland's icy mountains" and one for St. Stephen's day, "The Son of God goes forth to war" (508). Heber's lyrics are written in freer rhythms than those generally used; his style is easy and flowing, with just a little touch of the grand manner of the eighteenth century. Critics say that they are neither "scriptural" nor "dogmatic": in any case they are the work of a Christian gentleman of simple faith and devout feeling. Another early writer is Monsell who had been chaplain to Archbishop Mant (author of "Bright the vision that delighted" (2)). Monsell will always be remembered by his Epiphany hymn "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (221) and by his stirring "Fight the good fight" (497), both of which are addressed to men rather than to God.

To the Church Hymnary Ellerton and Walsham How between them contribute no fewer than thirty-six hymns, that is to say, more than 5 per cent. of the entire collection. It is almost certain that in future editions this high percentage will steadily decline. Each is a competent workman, each has written a few hymns that are certain to last: both wrote a number of hymns that are likely to be soon forgotten.

How loved children and was called the children's Bishop "Come praise your Lord and Saviour" (74) is wholly admirable, but few children who are not prigs would dream of saying:—

> "In our pleasure and our glee
> Lord we would remember Thee." (227, v. 2.)

and there is more of the preacher than the hymn-writer in words like these:—

> "That Christian boys with reverence meet
> May sit and learn at Jesus' feet." (73, v. 4.)

How has given us one really fine hymn, "For all the saints" (209) and one or two popular hymns, "O Jesus, Thou art standing" (380), "Summer suns are glowing" (587), "Winter reigneth o'er the land" (595) which is hardly a hymn at all: "On wings of living light" (110), and a children's hymn, "It is a thing most wonderful" (417) which expresses the feelings that grown-up people think children ought to have rather than the ideas which children actually entertain.

Ellerton was a hymnologist as well as a hymn-writer, and had much to do with compiling several

well-known Anglican collections. Like Walsham How, he was a very busy man who wrote hymns in his scanty leisure. It is somewhat remarkable that four of the evening hymns in the Church Hymnary are by Ellerton. Two of them deserve to be remembered: "The day Thou gavest" (277) and "Saviour again" (290). He wrote his hymns with very great care; every phrase for instance in his well-known funeral hymns, "Now the labourer's task is o'er" (316), "God of the living in whose eyes" (318), is most carefully chosen to express his belief in the "Intermediate State" as against Protestants who taught that dead saints go straight to heaven and Roman Catholics who believe that Masses offered for the dead assist them to escape from Purgatory. He wrote a popular wedding hymn for what is now a ducal family (316), a good processional for children "Again the morn of gladness" (226) and a vigorous, if somewhat free translation of the glorious Easter hymn of Fortunatus "Salve festa dies," "Welcome happy morning" (112).

The "Oxford movement" not only turned the thoughts of a large number of Anglicans in a "Catholic" direction, it unconsciouly affected almost every member of the English Church, and that in two ways. It created "reverence" and developed "Church activity." In Elizabethan times the Anglican did not hesitate to put his hat on the Communion table; in Jacobean times he walked about St. Paul's cathedral whilst divine service was going on, to interview a client or engage a servant: in the

eighteenth century the squire sat in his curtained pew and no man knew how he comported himself. Thanks to the Oxford movement, the services of the church were conducted in a much more "reverent" fashion, though it might be urged that the worshippers did not look so much like a band of happy children at home in their Father's house as a body of public schoolboys in the presence of the "Head." The eighteenth century parson took life easily. Unless he was a "pietist" who encouraged prayer meetings and believed in missions, he paid small attention to the old Church festivals and engaged in none of those Church activities such as Sunday schools, guilds, clubs and so forth which are now so characteristic of a well-organised parish. Hence it is that the Anglican clergy found abundant scope for writing new hymns. They wrote a large number for the greater festivals and the more important "seasons" such as Advent, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Ascensiontide, Whit-Sunday, Trinity, All Saints' and so forth. They provided hymns—sadly needed—for baptisms, marriages, funerals: for morning and above all, for evening prayer. Twells' "At even 'ere the sun was set" (265), Robinson's "Holy Father, cheer our way" (271) to be sung after the third collect, Baring-Gould's hymn for children, "Now the day is over" (274) are all good specimens of this kind of hymn. There are hymns for use at the Offertory, "We give Thee but Thine own" (332), hymns for choirs like Pott's "Angel voices" (241), hymns for missionary services like Marriott's splendid hymn "Thou whose almighty word" (349),

Oakley's "Hills of the north, rejoice" (356), "Now her watch Thy Church is keeping" (361); hymns for medical missions like Rawnsley's "Father, whose will is life and good" (339); hymns for the natural seasons; hymns for union like Lowry's "Son of God, eternal Saviour" (344); hymns for saints' days, like Ellerton's "O Son of God, our Captain of salvation" (345), in honour of St. Barnabas. Processional hymns like "Onward! Christian soldiers" (512), "Again the morn of gladness" (226), "Ten thousand times ten thousand" (212)—for all saints' day—"Forward be our watchword" (554), for a united choir festival. Patriotic hymns (606); hymns in honour of the Church when attacked by "higher critics"—"The Church's one foundation" (196), or by politicians "Thy hand, O God, has guided" (204). Communion hymns for "low Churchmen," "Jesus to Thy table led" (301), and for "high Churchmen," "And now O Father, mindful of the love" (305); hymns for mothers' unions "Lord of life and King of glory" (625) and similar parochial organisations. Hymns for schoolboys to sing in their school chapels, "Praise to our God" (645), "Lord behold us with Thy blessing" (646); hymns for hospitals, "Thou to whom the sick and dying" (338), "Thine arm, O Lord, in days of old" (83); hymns for Harvest Festivals, "Praise, O praise our God and King" (593), "Come, ye thankful people come" (588).

During most of the nineteenth century the Low Churchman might indulge in extemporary prayer, and occasionally appear at religious meetings along with Dissenters; the High Churchman might

introduce "illegal ceremonies" and supplement the authorised book of prayer with material derived from Roman service books, the "central" Churchman held aloof alike from Papist and Dissenter, stuck to his prayer-book, and as it was written centuries before men dreamt of harvest festivals and missionary meetings, invented hymns to provide for religious needs which the Book of Common Prayer ignored.

These hymns, as we have seen, were written by men as earnest and devout as they were cultured: men who had learnt the technique of hymn-writing, and cast the very best that they could offer into the treasury of the Church. And yet as most of the hymns of the eighteenth century have perished, most of the nineteenth century hymns will perish too. Time will test them and out of all that have been written perhaps a score, perhaps not quite so many, will remain and will deserve to remain.

B. Nonconformist Hymns.

(1) Neo-Pietist.

At first we are surprised to find that scarcely a single modern Methodist hymn is included in the Church Hymnary; for it looks as though for a hundred years the Methodist Church was dumb. That hymns were written goes without saying, but none of them has found favour in the eyes of our editors, and modern pietism is represented by contributions from two of the smaller sects.

This is not due to Calvinistic prejudice, real though that often is. Charles Wesley wrote so many hymns

on so many subjects that he left but little for his successors to do. In order to gain admission into a book like the Church Hymnary the modern Methodist hymn has to pass a stringent test. Not only has it to supply something which Charles Wesley failed to give, it has to provide something which is not to be met with in the greatest of Lutheran hymns and in the best Latin hymns of the Bernardine type. The number of hymns in any book is strictly limited and Methodism does not produce a hymn like Jesus Lover of my Soul every day.

However deeply we regret the intolerance so often met with in Plymouth Brethren who seem to regard the Kingdom of Heaven as their private preserve, we cannot fail to recognise their devotion to Christ their intense loyalty to truth as they see it. From this small body—the straitest of pietistic sects—we have a few hymns. Margaret Cockburn—Campbell's "Praise ye Jehovah" (32), Denny's Missionary Hymn "Light of the lonely pilgrim's heart" (366), and Deck's "O Lamb of God still keep me" (448), a somewhat crude amalgam of meditation and prayer.

The Moravian Brethren have never been numerous in England, yet like the Quakers they have always commanded the respect of those who knew them, and in James Montgomery they have given to the world one whom some regard as a poet whom all admit to be in the very forefront of the second class of English hymnists.

Montgomery, son of a Moravian missionary, tells

us that as a child the Moravian hymns "full of ardent expressions, tender complaints and animated prayers" were his delight. As a boy he was ambitious and dreamt of becoming a great poet. In manhood, however, though he wrote poems which had a wide circulation and were greatly admired by men like Wordsworth, though he was a publicist, owned a newspaper, and served his adopted city of Sheffield well, he remained unhappy since "unbelief hung heavy on his heart." In his early forties his faith returned, and he rejoined the Moravian Church. "To Him and to His people I have again devoted myself . . . an unworthy and ungrateful prodigal." In middle life, Montgomery, who was a pietist at heart, withdrew from public life and devoted his time to the service of what to him seemed more purely religious causes, such as foreign missions. Two facts require to be borne in mind when we think of Montgomery's hymns. In Sheffield there was no Moravian chapel, and Montgomery worshipped now with Anglicans, now with Wesleyans, now with Independents. The very fact that he was closely associated with none of the great religious "bodies" enabled him to realise and to express the points which all "evangelicals" have in common. In the next place, he took to hymn-writing after he had turned forty, when he had already served a long apprenticeship in the art of writing verse. His "Christian Psalmist" published in 1825 when he was fifty-four, consists of 562 hymns, 103 of which were written by himself. The introduction to this book is a brilliant piece of

writing and gives a critical account of the work of his predecessors which is still unequalled for brevity and acumen. Two quotations may serve to illustrate this contention. Of metrical psalters Montgomery says "The harp of David yet hangs upon the willow, disdaining the touch of any hand less skilful than his own." "Hymns," he says, "appear to have been written by all kinds of persons except poets." He felt that "A hymn ought to be as regular in its structure as any other poem": that it was an organism with "a beginning, a middle and end."

Of the fifteen hymns in the Church Hymnary by Montgomery the most important are:—

"Songs of Praise," (35); "Angels, from the realms of glory" (63); "Command Thy blessing" (229); "In the hour of trial" (502); "For ever with the Lord" (558); written when he was sixty-four, his fine Communion hymn "According to Thy gracious word" (297), and his magnificent Advent hymn, "Hail to the Lord's anointed" (147).

(2) Neo-Puritan.

It has been said, though with much exaggeration, that the eighteenth century gave us our most beautiful houses and our ugliest churches. The eighteenth century dissenting chapel was as I have said elsewhere primarily an umbrella to keep out the rain, a simple building in which a group of men and women met to pray, to sing, to listen to a man who professed to have something to tell them about God. During the nineteenth century the old Independent

meeting house gave place to the modern Congregationalist church. It is true that many of these churches were built when English ecclesiastical architecture had reached its lowest depths. It is true moreover that when nonconformists grew wealthy many of them forsook their chapel for the parish church, sometimes because they were snobs who sought admission to genteel society, more often perhaps because they had come to feel that the old parish church was a much more beautiful building than the congregationalist chapel, that psalms seemed to sound better when chanted by a surpliced choir, and that the incomparable English of the Book of Common Prayer was more attractive than the discursive language so often used in extemporary prayers. Rightly or wrongly the chapel was often judged by aesthetic rather than by religious standards. The Puritan had come to realise his deficiencies and was groping after some means of meeting them. Now it is always easier to buy a cake than to bake one and the Congregationalist found it easier to adopt the Anglican Chant than to invent new tunes, to use the sweet luscious enervating strains of Stainer, Barnby and the like rather than to produce music along the lines of the grand old tunes his fathers had bequeathed him. Tennyson's highly polished verse made men impatient of the ruder verses of an earlier day. The Puritan had turned critic and for the most part criticism, however useful, does not tend to produce creative work. Another fact demands attention. Throughout the whole of the latter half of the nineteenth century

orthodox views were called in question and from the very nature of the case Baptists and Congregationalists felt the difficulties which all have come to feel, more keenly than those who belonged to more conservative churches where subscription to definite articles was demanded of every minister when ordained. It is not easy to prophesy twice a week and for many years the trumpet gave forth an uncertain sound. Minister and people alike were perplexed. They lived in trying times and were far from certain what to believe concerning the death of Christ, the nature of the Trinity, Heaven and Hell Finally in the nineteenth century the independent minister was a much busier man than his predecessors. Sunday Schools, Guilds, Bible Classes, Foreign Missions—these and such as these made heavy demands upon his time and energy. The most devoted and energetic laymen in the church were almost equally busy. They had to raise large sums of money to perform innumerable duties of which their fathers never dreamed. From a Church whose energies were so much engaged in self-criticism, in seeking to adjust the form in which the unchanging Gospel was to be presented to a changing age, a Church which like Martha was cumbered with much serving and was harrassed with many cares it is not fair to expect a large number of great hymns. For if it be true that a character is formed through battling with the world it is equally true that a genius forms itself in solitude. Great poetry is not written by busy men.

This may serve to explain why there are so few

Congregationalist and Baptist hymns of the nineteenth century in the Church Hymnary though if the editors had dealt as leniently with Independents as with Anglicans there would have been many more.

Modern Congregationalists are poorly represented in the pages of the Church Hymnary, and indeed the book would be little the poorer if their contributions had been omitted altogether. Reed, famous in his day for good works and revivals in England and America, has "Spirit Divine" (178). Lynch, another Congregationalist minister is represented by "Gracious Spirit" (182) and the jubilant "The Lord is rich and merciful" (381). Rawson adds one to the long list of evening hymns, "Father in high heaven dwelling" (270) and a really fine Communion hymn, "By Christ redeemed" (307). The older type of minister is represented by Robinson "Loved with everlasting love" (415), and the most modern type by Basil Matthews "Far round the world" (357). Thomas Binney, an eminent minister, wrote one hymn "Eternal Light" (33).

From laymen we have Walmsley's "The sun declines" (260), Shrubsole's missionary hymn, "Arm of the Lord, awake." Conder (more celebrated as an editor than an author), contributes "The Lord is King" (24) and Bateman a good children's hymn "Come children join to sing" (170).

To John Fawcett, a Baptist of the older generation, we owe two fine hymns. "Lord dismiss us" (287), and "Blest be the tie that binds" (465). To Joseph Swain, another Baptist minister of the same period, the fervent appeal "Come ye souls by sin

afflicted" (376). To W. H. Parker a prayer, apparently intended for the use of children, to the Holy Ghost (186).

(3) UNITARIAN.

The English Unitarian, eminent alike for intellect and morality, contributes little. Stopford Brooke has three hymns, none of them in any way distinguished, two of which "When the Lord of love was here" (77), "It fell upon a summer day" (78), deal with Christ's earthly life, and one (219) which is a very modern rendering of the hundredth psalm. Sir John Bowring, renowned alike as a fine linguist and a capable man of affairs, has two hymns, "God is love" (31) and "In the cross of Christ I glory" (108). A good hymn on the Church was written by S. Johnson, "City of God" (199). Gill has one fine hymn, "We come unto our fathers' God" (201) and two others (476 and 583). John Page Hopps, well known in his denomination, has a rather feeble children's hymn, "Father lead me day by day" (542), Wreford a national hymn "Lord, while for all mankind we pray" (605). William Gaskell, a layman, has "Though lowly here" (494).

"Every denomination of Christians," says Montgomery, "has a language peculiar to itself, or rather a peculiar dialect of the mother tongue of all Christians."

When we ask what is this dialect, or to put the same thing in another way, on what aspect of the Christian life does the nineteenth century Dissenter

throw fresh light, the answer is somewhat disappointing. Apart from Montgomery, who stands out head and shoulders above a group of lesser men, there is no one who could touch Watts's harp or that of Wesley. Far from bearing comparison with their own great ancestors, they are sadly inferior to contemporary Anglican hymn-writers.

Appendix

(1) Roman Catholic Hymns.

The Church of Rome has done little to encourage the production of vernacular hymns. Most of her hymn books are exceedingly poor, and the contrast between the Latin hymns sung at her main services and those written for popular use, say at "Benediction," is most pronounced. In England two converts to the Roman Catholic Church have written hymns which have passed into all collections. When in agony of mind, face to face with crisis and perplexity, Newman poured forth his prayer for guidance, he little thought that his words would be sung all over the world. Newman would have been the first to maintain that "Lead kindly Light" (545) is not a hymn at all. His fellow-men have thought otherwise and this beautiful lyric is included in every hymn book. "Praise to the Holiest in the height" (29), from "The Dream of Gerontius," is deservedly popular though it is hard to believe that an ordinary congregation can sing the verse beginning "And that a higher gift than grace" with understanding.

Newman was one of the most reserved of men. His life in the Catholic Church was far from easy; he knew by bitter experience the meaning of grief

and disappointment, yet he detested emotional display and carefully hid his deepest feelings. Faber, on the other hand, is essentially emotional. When he realised how poorly English Catholics were provided with English hymns, he set himself to supply the deficiency.

Many of his hymns are popular: "O come and mourn" (92) contains two splendid lines (v. 4). "Faith of our fathers!" (207) has been appropriated by non-Catholics. "Sweet Saviour bless us" (289)—its first line altered—is a favourite evening hymn. "Souls of men" (378) is a fine presentation of Gospel truth, whilst "Hark, hark, my soul," sentimental though it be, supplies a want by reminding us that references to angels are much more frequent in the pages of the New Testament than in the modern pulpit.

"O Deus, ego amo te" (414) "My God I love Thee" based on a Spanish hymn is ascribed to Xavier the great Jesuit missionary. "Jerusalem my happy home" (569) is part of a long poem supposed to have been written in the sixteenth century by an English Roman Catholic priest. It is at once one of the quaintest and most beautiful of the hymns which deal with heaven. Apart from its great length, deference to Protestant sentiment has led our editors to omit some of its most beautiful verses, such as that which begins "Our Lady sings Magnificat." "When morning gilds the skies" (159) is part of a German catholic hymn which Caswall, probably the best of all our translators, has turned into English with his usual skill.

Though neither can be called *Roman* Catholic, this is the best place to mention two Italian "hymns" which are new to most Presbyterians. Bianco da Siena's lovely song "Come down, O Love Divine," and the canticle of St. Francis, most Christ-like of men, who loved all God's creatures with a love that has never been equalled by mortal man, "All creatures of our God and King" (11).

(2) American Hymns.

There was a time when American culture was largely dependent on that of Europe. These days are passing, and American literature is coming to have a character of its own. So far, however, the most typical religious products of America have been "negro spirituals" and revival hymns; but the time must come when she will make her own contribution—no doubt it will be a great one—to religious experience, and may produce hymns worthy to rank even with the hymns of the English Puritans and Pietists, with the hymns of the Lutheran and of the medieval Church. So far, however, nothing of the kind has been done, and most of the American hymns in the Church Hymnary have been written by men who were not only profoundly influenced by European culture, but were in spirit more akin to England than the average American feels himself to be. The best American hymns have been written by Unitarians. O. W. Holmes's "Lord of all being" (23), Sears' "It came upon the midnight clear" (42), Pierpoint's "For the beauty of the earth" (17), Chadwick's "Eternal Ruler of the

ceaseless round" (467) are hymns that every collection is glad to include. Longfellow has steadily lost ground in popular esteem. For the most part his hymns are feeble, and the same is true of Bryant. Hosmer "Thy Kingdom come" (146) and Blatchford "A gladsome hymn" are also represented. Episcopalians have given us:—Everest—"Take up thy cross" (479); Doane—"Thou art the Way" (164); Hanby—"Who is He, in yonder stall?" (67). Among Congregationalists are:—Gladden "O Master let me walk with Thee" (325) and—much more important—Palmer with his fine translation of "Jesus Thou joy of loving hearts" (Jesu Dulcedo Cordium) 405, and his own "My faith looks up to Thee" (396). Benson, much more famous as a hymnologist than as a hymn-writer, who is responsible for "O sing a song of Bethlehem" (71), and Duffield, who wrote "Stand up, stand up for Jesus" (510), represent the Presbyterians. When, however, English worshippers think of American hymns, their thoughts instinctively turn to Whittier. Whittier was a Quaker, and as such took small interest in hymns. But from his poems certain passages have been selected and used as hymns. For a time they enjoyed great popularity, and undoubtedly they still meet the needs of a certain type of worshipper. But they are far better adapted to be read in private than to be sung in the House of God. They are beloved of "Quietists" and "Quietism" has never flourished in the Calvinistic Church, nor indeed is it desirable that it should. "Immortal Love" (135), "Dear Lord and Father of

mankind" (234) have many admirers though these are not often found in the number of those who have sought to discover what a hymn really is, and what effect it is intended to produce. "Who fathoms the eternal thought" (536) is highly subjective, whilst "When on my day of life" (562) written when the saintly poet was seventy-five, though a beautiful confession of undogmatic faith, is, apart from the musical difficulties which it presents, hardly suitable for general congregational use.

(3) Hymns by Women.

Some sixty women are represented in the Church Hymnary,[1] and some of the best hymns of the nineteenth century have come from their pens. Three women, Catharine Winkworth, F. E. Cox and Jane Borthwick, have made splendid translations of German hymns, and to another woman translator we owe our version of the magnificent "Hymn of St. Patrick" (483). About 40 per cent. of the "emotional" hymns selected for use at mission services were written by women. These include such well-known hymns as "Tell me the old, old story" (650), "Rescue the perishing" (649), "I need Thee every hour" (668), "I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus" (662), "There were ninety-and-nine" (652), "Lord, I hear of showers of blessing" (655).

As one might expect, many, if not most of the best hymns for children were written by women. More than 40 per cent. of the hymns "For Home and

[1] Apart from translations, there are ninety hymns by women in Church Hymnary.

School" come from them. J. Threlfall's "Hosanna, loud Hosanna" (89), Mary Butler's "Looking upward every day" (641), Grace Hinsdale's "O what can little hands do?" (639), Jane Leeson's "Loving Shepherd of the sheep" (637), Frances Havergall's "Golden harps are sounding" (127), Anna Warner's "Jesus loves me" (632), Mary Lundie's "Jesus tender Shepherd" (627), Jemmima Luke's "I think when I read" (80), Anne Shepherd's "Around the throne of God" (573), and Mary Deck's "There is a city bright" are all deservedly popular. In due time no doubt Mary Macdonald's lovely cradle song will be added to the list. Mrs. Alexander, by some regarded as a genuine poet, whose two fine hymns, one on the Passion "There is a green hill" (105), the other on the call of St. Andrew, "Jesus calls us" (490), are included, wrote a number of hymns for children. They were once more popular than they are to-day, for not only are they marred by such puerile lines as:—

> "The rushes by the water
> We gather every day"

but in them the nursery governess and the fussy parson's wife are too pronounced. In her hymns, Mrs. Alexander is apt to preach at children. Her epithets are often ill-chosen, her homilies far from effective.

> "Christian children all must be
> *Mild*, obedient, good as He." (H. 66, v. 3)

Frances Havergall is at her best when she speaks

of consecration, "Jesus, Master, whose I am" (487), "Lord speak to me that I may speak" (324) are good examples of their kind, and the stirring appeal, "Who is on the Lord's side?" is often sung. Like the men of the nineteenth century, the women cultivate the subjective prayer type of hymn rather than the objective type which expresses praise. There are prayers for travellers and absent friends "Star of Peace" (600), Holy Father, in Thy mercy" (602). There are prayers for the opening of Divine Service, "God of pity, God of grace" (230), and prayers for use before sermon, "Break Thou the Bread of Life" (193). Women have written hymns in view of death (560): hymns of faith and trust—"Father, I know that all my life" (526); hymns for all seasons—a difficult subject—"Fountain of mercy" (590); hymns for the close of the year—"Still on the homeward journey" (580). Funeral hymns "Safely, safely gathered in" (314); marriage hymns, "O perfect love" (313). One even for a golden wedding. There are hymns in praise of Jesus, "In the Name of Jesus" (167). Hymns of thanksgiving—"My God I thank Thee" (421), and hymns of praise, "Praise ye Jehovah" (32). None of these hymns is bad, none remarkably good. They are on a level—a by no means distinguished level—of the average nineteenth century hymn. We are glad to have them, but—children's hymns apart—we should not greatly miss them if they were all withdrawn.

But women have done better work than this. Two women, Christina Rossetti and Jean Ingelow,

have written the most poetical hymns of the nineteenth century. None will deny that "Love came down at Christmas," "And didst Thou love the race that loved not Thee?" are two of the most exquisite pieces of devotional poetry which the nineteenth century produced We should indeed be poorer had Christina Rossetti and Jean Ingelow not written, and did we not possess their exquisite gems. But whether these poems are hymns, and if hymns, whether they are good hymns, is a very different question.

In some ways the most stirring song in the Church Hymnary is Julia Ward Howe's "Battle Song of the Republic" (148), though once again the word "hymn" has to be stretched to its very utmost to include it.

When we turn, however, to three of the greatest hymns of the nineteenth century, we are on solid ground. Harriet Auber's "Our blest Redeemer" is fitly placed beside the incomparable "Veni sancte Spiritus" (175). "Nearer my God to Thee" is the greatest hymn ever written by a Unitarian, and in the Church Hymnary Charlotte Elliott's "Just as I am" (391) is rightly set beside Luther's "Aus tiefer Noth" (390): the one the noblest plea for forgiveness of the nineteenth century, the other the greatest cry that ever proceeded from the depths of Luther's heart.

(4) Presbyterian Hymns.

(*a*) The Scottish Paraphrases.

The Westminster Assembly of Divines held its first session on July 1st, 1643. Some two months later Lords and Commons signed the "Solemn League and Covenant" which pledged England and Scotland (to say nothing of Ireland) to adopt one form of Church government, one manual of devotion, and one book of praise. The book of praise was the revised edition of "The Booke of Psalmes in English Meeter" by Francis Rous, a Cornish gentleman who was in those days an ardent Presbyterian. England never adopted Rous's Psalter; Scotland did, though in course of time she so changed it that little of Rous's original work remains. The Scottish Psalter[1] is the outcome of constant revision of an English book. From the day in which it was adopted it became and continued for many years to be the sole manual of praise employed in the public worship of the Scottish Church.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, the Church began to feel the need of something a little more Christian to supplement the Hebrew psalms. In 1741 the General Assembly agreed that "some fit persons be recommended to turn some passages of the Old and New Testaments into metre to be used in Churches as well as in private families." After interminable discussion the

[1] *The Metrical Psalms and Paraphrases,* by the Rev. Thos. Young, B.D. (The Guild Library: A. & C. Black.)

Committee on Psalmody gave in their final report in 1781, and the Assembly allowed the "Collection of Sacred Poems" which had been made "to be used in Public Worship in congregations where the minister finds it for edification." Thus we get the Scottish Paraphrases. From that famous collection which has endeared itself to every Presbyterian heart, thirteen pieces have found their way into the Church Hymnary. No one can speak with certainty about their authorship, for almost every one of them was altered over and over again in committees which met during a period of nearly forty years. Some of them are like folk-songs which owe their best lines to utterly unknown men. We may, however, divide our Paraphrases into two parts. Some of them were written by Scottish Presbyterians, some of them were written in England and altered in much the same way as Rous's psalms were altered. In every instance the alteration was an improvement, in some cases a very great improvement, on the original. Watts is responsible for the hymns on which four of the Paraphrases are based "Blest be the everlasting God" (128), "How bright those glorious spirits shine" (210), "Behold the amazing gift of love" (462), "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord" (485). Doddridge for three, "Father of peace" (458), "Hark the glad sound" (37) and "O God of Bethel" (539). One "While humble shepherds" (38) was taken from a piece which Tate added to the well-known Tate and Brady Psalter.

It will be noted that the Scottish divines responsible for compiling the Paraphrases felt their kinship

with Watts and Doddridge and ignored the Wesleys.

From Scotland we have the rest. Morrison's great hymns "The race that long" (57), "Come let us to the Lord our God" (382), "'Twas on that night" (298). From Bruce-Logan[1] "Where high the heavenly temple stands" (134), "Behold the mountain of the Lord."

(*b*) Modern Hymns.

For many years Presbyterians were perfectly content to sing Psalms and Paraphrases, and this to some extent explains the fact that they have written so few hymns. During the nineteenth century they did not succeed in producing one hymn of the first rank. Horatius Bonar, pietist and millenarian, well-versed in patristics and in the hymns of the Greek and Latin Churches, whose hymns have been sung all over the world by Protestant and Catholic alike,[2] is probably their foremost hymn-writer. He began when a "missionary" by doing as Luther had done. In order to interest his Sunday School children he wrote words which they could sing to such tunes as the "Flowers of the Forest" and "Old Hundred." His first hymn was "I lay my sins on Jesus" (661), which whilst admirably adapted for use at a revival meeting is less well suited to the needs of children.

[1] A whole library is growing up on the question as to whether Bruce or Logan wrote certain paraphrases. Space forbids discussion of this vexed question here.

[2] See his son's Introduction.

In the twentieth century we feel that it is not altogether wise to encourage children to sing such words as these:—

"I long to be with Jesus,
Amid the heavenly throng,
To sing with saints His praises,
To learn the angels' song."

Three of his hymns are wholly admirable: "I heard the voice of Jesus say" (395); "When the weary seeking rest" (244) written for the English Presbyterian Hymnal, and his magnificent Communion hymn, "Here O my Lord" (304) first written to be *read* at a Communion Service in his brother's church at Greenock in 1855.

Among well-known Presbyterian hymns are: "Courage brother!" (507) by Norman MacLeod, and J. D. Burns's "Hushed was the evening hymn" (240); "For Thee my God" (453); Robertson's baptismal hymn "A little Child" (291) is often used. Walter Smith's "Immortal, invisible" (13) reminds us that he was a poet, whilst his "One thing I of the Lord desire" (440) reminds us that he was a saint.

In recent years one of the most popular of Presbyterian hymns has been "O Love, that wilt not let me go." Some of Matheson's other hymns like "Make me a captive, Lord" (444) employ paradox so freely that ordinary congregations find them rather difficult to follow.

Epilogue

St. Paul once reminded his Corinthian readers that most of them were humble folk; "not many wise," he said, "not many mighty are called," but another of the sacred writers foresaw a time when the kings of the earth would enter New Jerusalem, bringing their glory and their honour into it. Montgomery said that no poet had written hymns; yet whilst it is true that the majority of hymn-writers have been unknown men and women, with small claim to remembrance or distinction, some of the hymns in our collection were written by men who have won laurels on other fields. If Dante, who consecrated his genius to the service of his Lord, be as some maintain, the greatest lord of song, Milton is certainly one of the greatest of English poets. In one sense the last of the Elizabethans, in another the greatest of Puritans, he hated Presbyterians and was far from orthodox. Yet we are glad to have some verses which he wrote as a boy of fifteen "Let us with a gladsome mind" (10), and some others taken from his glorious "Ode to the Nativity" (56), savouring though it does rather of the Renaissance than of the Reformation. Dryden is not at his best in his stilted version of "Veni Creator" (174); but of its kind not even Blake wrote a more glorious song than his "And did those feet in ancient time" (611). There was nothing more characteristic of

eighteenth century England than the "Spectator," and little better in the "Spectator" than Addison's famous hymns "The spacious firmament on high" (8), "When all Thy mercies, O my God" (25).

In any list of minor English poets, George Herbert is sure to find a place. "Let all the world" (14), "Teach me, my God and King" (493) are from his pen. From Henry Vaughan, the mystic, is taken the lovely song "My soul, there is a country." From his great contemporary Richard Baxter "Ye holy angels bright" (34), "He wants not friends" (215), with the lovely lines beginning, "The several vessels of Thy fleet," and "Lord it belongs not to my care" (527). To the same period belongs one of the greatest masters of English prose. Of the little verse John Bunyan wrote two songs are given "He that is down need fear no fall" (534) and "Who would true valour see" (550) that reminds us of a song by Shakespeare.

To Sir Walter Scott, who may almost be said to have died with the Latin words of the "Dies Irae" on his lips, who had such passionate love for medieval hymns, we owe a version of part of the "Dies Irae" (155) and "When Israel of the Lord beloved" (352). From the Victorian age when science revealed so many of her wonders, that a wistful agnosticism became the dismal creed of many devout and thoughtful men, when Watts represented Hope as a blinded figure striking a broken lyre, and John Stuart Mill thought that after all the Sermon on the Mount, freed from its miraculous setting, was the finest of moral codes; we have "These things shall

be" (613) by John Addington Symonds, "Say not the struggle" (514) by Clough; "Strong Son of God" and "Crossing the Bar" by Tennyson, and a noble version of Luther's greatest hymn by Thomas Carlyle. Of writers still alive, Gilbert Chesterton—"O God of earth and altar" (610). Kipling, the poet of that which in Victoria's time was known as "Imperialism"—"God of our fathers" (608), and "Land of our birth" (619), and best of all Robert Bridges, his work hidden beneath the name of the Yattendon Hymnal which he edited and enriched with so many beautiful pieces. The Yattendon Hymnal was the first to teach by example as well as precept that the best and nothing but the best should be used in the praise of God. Though it is only a sixth of the size of the Church Hymnary, it contains most of the best hymns, and exercises an ever-increasing influence on those who compile hymn-books. It should be doubly dear to Presbyterians since in the notes appended to the Hymnal, Bridges calls attention to the fact, so often forgotten, that for congregational purposes there are few greater tunes than "Old Hundred" and "Now Israel may say" which Louis Bourgeois wrote for the Genevan Psalter. Bridges maintains—and surely his contention is right—that Calvin owed not a little of his influence to these and other great Presbyterian tunes.

PRINTED BY
W. HEFFER AND SONS LTD.,
CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND

07-APO-136